

THE
Religious Observance
OF THE 2
SABBATH

Practically stated and enforced.

By THOMAS GIBBONS. DD

——— *Warning every Man, and teaching every Man in all Wisdom; that we may present every Man perfect in Christ Jesus; whereunto I also labour. Col. i. 28, 29.*

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. OSWALD in the Poultry;
RICHARD KING in Fore-street; JAMES
BUCKLAND in Pater-Noster-Row; J. WARD
in Little Britain; and E. GARDINER in Lombard-street. MDCCXLVIII.

(Price One Shilling, with Allowance to such as give them away.)



TO THE
CHURCH of CHRIST

Assembling at

HABERDASHERS HALL, *London.*

Dearly beloved in our Lord *Jesus Christ*,

THE Age in which Providence has seen fit to distribute our Lot, is an Age of great Apostacy in Principles and Manners. Infidelity has not only gone so far as to discredit what appear to us the substantial Doctrines of the Gospel, and what are the Basis of the Sinners Hope, and the blessed Fountains of his Joy ; but it has even dared, after pulling down the main Supports of the Christian Building, to make an audacious Attack upon the whole Superstructure, and many are exerting all their Artifice, and Power, to raze it to

B

the

the very Foundations. And with Infidelity Immorality (of which it is hard to say which of the two is most the Cause or most the Effect) has broke in upon us like a Flood, and our Age is characterized in the Description our LORD gives of the latter Times, *that Iniquity shall abound, and the Love of many shall wax cold **, and faithfully and accurately depicted in the Apostle PAUL's Prophecy, *that in the last Days perilous Time shall come, when Men shall be Lovers of their own selves, Covetous, Boasters, Proud, Blasphemers, Disobedient to Parents, Unthankful, Unholy, without natural Affection, Truce-Breakers, false Accusers, Incontinent, Fierce, Despisers of those that are Good, Traitors, Heady, High-minded, Lovers of Pleasure more than Lovers of God, having a Form of Godliness, but denying the Power thereof †*.

Amidst so general a Torrent of Wickedness, both in Faith and Practice, it is hard to maintain our Ground, and ex-

* Matt. xxiv. 12.

† 2 Tim. iii. 1.

D E D I C A T I O N. iii

ert a brave and inflexible Opposition to the encroaching Ruin, especially since we find in us an Heart treacherously prone to backslide from God, and our holy Profession; a Danger so great that, without the Addition of external Temptation, it would bear us down with the overflowing Stream, was not God to interpose for our Assistance with his Grace, and make good his Assurance, that he will be *the Sun and Shield, and give Grace and Glory, and withhold no good Thing from them that walk uprightly* *. On these and such like Promises, is the Anchor of our Hope fixed, and blessed be God, that it is sure and stedfast.

But however, though it is the Almighty Help that alone can preserve us unhurt through the powerful Temptations of evil Custom and Example, yet in Order that we may enjoy the Divine Succours in every Hour of Trial, it is necessary that we should make use of every proper Mean to secure us

* Psal. lxxxiv. 11.

from making Shipwreck of Faith, and of a good Conscience, as God has evidently connected Means and Blessings together, and made the first the usual and appointed Channels of conveying the last; and of the various Means adapted to this Purpose, an Attendance upon the Ministry of the Gospel is an Ordinance that bears the Sanction of Heaven upon it, and, I may add, it is ratified by the additional concurrent Witness of the Experience of Numbers of the People of God in every Age, in the Instruction, Establishment, and Consolation of their Souls. I am glad therefore that you choose to be mingled with them that forsake not the Assembling of their Selves together, as is the too general Manner of the present Age, and I hope, you are reaping the Benefit in a growing Treasure of divine Knowledge and Support; and so, instead of making the malignant Darkness of the present Days more gross and general, are more and more distinguished, as burning and shining Lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation.

more

But

DEDICATION. ♥

But still there is Need for each of us to regard his respective Lamp, and he that bears the brightest amongst us, should be still desirous of an Increase to its Fervor; and it may be that some of our Lights are growing faint and dim, and the Fogs and Damps of a loose and prophane World, have sadly diminished and obscured their sacred Flames.

Let me therefore *stir up our pure*, may I not rather say our impure *Minds*, for so they are in Part, *by Way of Remembrance* *. And you will suffer me to represent, and enforce upon you all the Branches of Doctrine and Duty that belong to our holy Religion, that so we *may not, being led away by the Error of the wicked, fall from our Steadfastness; but grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* †.

To do this has been the Scope of my Labours amongst you, though they have been mixed with a thousand Imperfections, and Weaknesses; and I trust, the Grace of God assisting me, that I shall

* 2 Pet. iii. 1.

† 2 Pet. iii. 17, 18.

still continue the same Resolution and Conduct till Death shall put a Period to all my Services, and introduce me, as I would hope, into that World where ministerial Duties are neither needed nor known.

And as a Proof, at least in some Degree, of what I declare, accept of the following Treatise at my Hands; a Treatise that as to the Substance of it has been made yours already in two Discourses on the Sanctification of the Sabbath, delivered above a Year since amongst you; a Treatise upon one of the most momentous Articles of sacred Practice; and a Treatise that comes with the Perfumes of a most cordial Friendship, and with the warmest Wishes for its Success to your Souls.

I am very sensible, that at the same Time that I am publishing this Essay for your Service, I am exposing it to the View of the World, and therefore some farther Account may be expected relating to the Nature and Publication of the Piece.

As

DEDICATION. vii

As to the Nature of the Piece it is entirely practical, and I must advertise my Reader that it was not my Intention to compose, and therefore it is not to be his Expectation to receive a Discussion of the many critical and controversial Points belonging to this Subject; this has been done by several Writers already, and I by no means think my self able to glean any material Knowledge after they have gathered their Harvest. But I cannot recollect that I have seen the Subject of the Sanctification of the Sabbath treated only in a practical View, and in a small Compass, and therefore, as I knew that this Work was necessary, I was willing to supply this Deficiency.

I must farther apprise my Reader, that he is not to expect any Ornaments of Language in the following Discourse, for I have endeavoured to write, as I endeavour to preach, for the Benefit of the Lower, as well as to avoid the Contempts of the Higher Ranks of Life; and methinks I would not have so much as one profitable Idea, if any may be
called

called such in the following Pages, smothered in the pompous, but obscure Veil of hard and uncommon Expression.

The Reasons that induced me to a Publication of this Piece, were the great Disregard to the Sanctification of the Sabbath, and the Want of a practical Treatise upon this Subject, as has been just hinted; and though I am sensible that in many Respects I am unfit for such an Undertaking, yet I am conscious to my self of the Sincerity of my Intentions in digesting, and publishing this Essay, and I would hope that my unknown Readers will be so candid as to admit my Declaration as true, and so mingle as much Tenderness to me in the Perusal, as Imperfection and Failing with the Odour of Sincerity upon them will allow them to exercise.

Happy Publication, if but one of my Readers is awakened to an holy Observance of the Sabbath, or if one, who has been too remiss and lax in the Sanctification of this sacred Day, does
but

DEDICATION. ix

but feel the Obligations to this Duty bind faster and stronger upon Conscience and Conduct!

I have nothing more, my dear Flock, to add, but my hearty Prayers for your daily Prosperity and Growth in Grace, and my earnest Desires for a Share in your Requests for my equal and successful Discharge of the various and difficult Branches of the pastoral Charge; and may that Love and Harmony that have hitherto subsisted amongst us, with an unfading, and I believe I may add, a rising Glory, be still continued and promoted, and may this Union be invigorated and ennobled by increasing Holiness, that we may be better prepared for the Employments and Felicity of the heavenly World.

I am, My dear Friends,

Your most affectionate Brother

and Servant in the Gospel,

Bunhill-Row,

Dec. 8. 1747.

THO. GIBBONS.

THE

THE
Religious Observance
OF THE
S A B B A T H,

Practically stated and enforced.

SUCH is the State of Religion in the present Times, that the greater Part of our Land would think it a most offensive Brand of Reproach if we were to strike off their Names from the Roll of Christians, or Believers in Christ: and yet but a very small Minority amongst us shew that we have any Title to the Name of a Christian, or a Believer in Christ, by walking in the Ordinances and Commandments of the Lord blameless; and our Religion in general appears to go no farther than Profession, and the empty Forms of Piety and Rounds of Devotion.

A

As a Proof that I am not too severe in my Sentiments of the Age we live in, I would only have it duly considered what is the general Belief, and what is the general Conduct amongst us as to the Sabbath-Day. There are none amongst us that call ourselves Christians that I know of, but acknowledge that one Day in seven is to be set apart for the Worship of God, and yet this Day is abused to the most wanton and wicked Licentiousness by *Some*, neglected and trifled away by *Others*, and *Many*, who seem diligent and zealous to consecrate a Part of the Day to Religion, pour out many of its precious Moments at waste ; and Morning, Noon, and Evening, are far from wearing the same Marks of Sanctity that the Hours of publick Service are adorned, or should I not rather say, disguised with.

There is therefore a great Necessity that the Sanctification of the Sabbath should be frequently insisted upon, and recommended from the Pulpit ; and I would hope that this Subject is not totally omitted, or only transiently touched upon, either amongst the Established Church, or the Dissenters. But still the Pulpit is not the only Promoter of the Sanctification of the Sabbath, but the Press may possibly and probably be

I employed

employed with great Profit for the Defence, and Enforcement of this important Article of our holy Religion: And it may be a few warm Pages lying by us on this Head may serve to fix the Discourses we hear from the Minister more strongly upon our Minds, or, if we have heard but little of the Sanctification of the Sabbath from the Pulpit, they may be of Use to instruct our Understandings more distinctly, and fully into the Nature of the religious Observation of this holy Day, and impress our Hearts with a lively Sense of the vast Weight, and absolute Necessity of this Duty.

Regard then, O Man, whosoever thou art, what I am now offering upon the Sanctification of the Sabbath! What I am representing and urging, is what I esteem to be the Will of God; and from the sacred Scripture, I shall borrow my Supports of the Duty I am going to explain, and enforce; and, if what I shall mention, will abide, as I think it will, the Test of the divine Oracles, take heed how thou rejectest the Counsel of God against thy self, remembering what an awful Thunder closes up the sacred Volume, *and if any Man shall take away from the Words of the Book of this Prophecy*, this Robbery may be committed in Practice as well as Notion, *God shall*

*shall take away his Part out of the Book of Life, and out of the holy City, and from the Things which are written in this Book *.*

In Order that I may lead your Thoughts upon this Subject in a regular Train, I shall

I. Represent the Reasonableness and Necessity of the Sanctification of the Sabbath, And

II. I shall state the Nature of its Sanctification.

Afterwards will follow some Objections and Queries, and the general Improvement of the Subject.

(I.) I shall represent the Reasonableness, and Necessity of the Sanctification of the Sabbath. And many Arguments may be produced upon this Head.

I. It is the express Command of God that we should sanctify the Sabbath. *And on the Seventh Day, God had ended his Work which he had made, and he rested on the Seventh Day from all his Work which he had made; and God blessed the Seventh Day, and sanctified it †. Again, Remember the Sabbath-Day to keep it holy, Six Days shalt thou labour and do all thy Work, but the Seventh is*

* Rev. xxii. 19. † Gen. ii. 2, 3.

the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, in it thou shalt not do any Work, thou nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, nor thy Man-Servant, nor thy Maid-Servant, nor thy Cattle, nor thy Stranger that is within thy Gates; for in Six Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth the Sea and all that in them is, and rested the Seventh Day, wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-Day, and hallowed it *. And the same Command is renewed: *Keep the Sabbath to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God has commanded thee* †. You find that the Command was given at the Creation of the World, and therefore without Question it was observed by the long Train of Saints in the Ages before the Flood, and it is evident that the *Israelites* in their several Generations kept it, and the Command was at various Seasons published amongst them, and once from the very Mouth of God himself when he came down in awful Majesty upon Mount *Sinai*, and delivered the Law. And methinks there is something of extraordinary Weight in the Word that ushers in the fourth Commandment, **REMEMBER the Sabbath Day to keep it holy**. As if God had said, “ You know what “ was the Order I issued out at the Finish- “ ing the Work of Creation, and you have

* *Exod. xx. 8.—11.*† *Deut v. 12.*

“ the Footsteps of all my former Saints to
 “ observe, and copy after ; let not my
 “ Command therefore ever be a Stranger
 “ to your Minds, but after you have num-
 “ bered six Days for your selves, never
 “ forget to call and sanctify the Seventh as
 “ mine ; my Name is inscribed upon it,
 “ and therefore love, and honour it.” And
 is the Sabbath to be sanctified at the ex-
 press Command of God, and dare any of
 us set this Command at Nought ? Is not
 God the Father of our Spirits, the Former
 of our Bodies, and the Fountain of our Blef-
 sings, and has he not therefore an indis-
 putable Right to the Homage and Obe-
 dience of the reasonable Creatures he has
 made, and on whom, that he might ex-
 cite, and nourish their Homage, and Obe-
 dience, he has conferred all the Comforts
 they enjoy ? Is it becoming a Worm, a
 Child of Dust, a Span of Mortality, to
 raise itself up in Rebellion against the su-
 preme Majesty of Heaven and Earth, and
 put a bold Negative upon the Divine Pre-
 cepts ? We should look with Astonishment
 upon that Wretch who durst insolently tell
 his Sovereign, his Father, his best Friend,
 that he would not obey his Will, though a
 Will that carried its Justice, Propriety, and
 Argument in the very Mention of it, what
 shall

shall we think then of that Sinner that sets up his perverse Inclination against the God over all blessed for evermore, the Father of ever-living and flowing Mercies, and the only suitable Portion, and satisfying Rest of the Soul? As little as we may rate the divine Command, yet I am sure it was highly revered by the antient Worthies, who, in Compliance with the Pleasure of God, left their peaceful Settlement and wandered into unknown Countries, nay, and lest they should break through so much as one Edict of Heaven, *they were stoned, sawn asunder**, and through the bloodiest Baptisms of Martyrdom obtained their Way, and had an abundant Entrance administered to them into the everlasting Kingdom of their Lord. Can we hesitate, and draw back from the Law of God concerning the Sabbath, a Law that is far from requiring any Thing terrible to us, when *Abraham*†, at the Command of God, led up his Son, his only Son, to the Mountain of Sacrifice, prepared the Wood, kindled the Fire, bound his Child with his own Hands for a bloody Victim, and grasped the Knife to slay his Son, the Son of his old Age, the Son of the Promise, a Promise that treasured in its Womb an innumerable Posterity, the incar-

* Heb. xi. 37.

† Gen. xxii. 1.

nate Messiah, and an inexhaustible Fund of spiritual and eternal Blessings?

2. The Example of Christ recommends to us the Sanctification of the Sabbath. It is very true that in our Lord's Life there are many Instances of his freeing the Sabbath from those superstitious and unappointed Observances, with which the Scribes and Pharisees, either from a misguided Judgment, or a more criminal Malice against our Lord, encumbered it. Thus our Lord often healed on the Sabbath-Day, and sometimes bid the Persons who received Healing to take up their Beds, and walk. And again, when the Disciples, to suffice the Cravings of Hunger on the Sabbath Day rubbed the Ears of Corn in their Hands and eat them, our Lord vindicated their Conduct from their unjust Aspersions who charged them with a Violation of the Sabbath. But notwithstanding these Instances, there is sufficient Proof that our Lord kept the Sabbath, since we find that, though he often relieved the Sabbath from the Burdens of Superstition the *Jews* had oppressed it with, he never blamed them in the least for the regular and holy Sanctification of the Day, and his very Rebukes of their unwarrantable Rigors were such as plainly import that the Sanctification of the Sabbath

Sabbath was needful, though Abuses of it in an uncommanded Preciseness were not to be allowed and practised. Again, our Lord speaking of the terrible Ruin that was soon to come upon *Jerusalem*, exhorts the Inhabitants of it *to pray that their Flight might not be on the Sabbath-Day* *, importing that the Sanctification of the Sabbath was not designed to be abolished by him. And what closes the Argument is, that Christ on the Sabbath-Day honoured the Synagogue with his frequent Presence, and Service there. *And he came to NAZARETH where he had been brought up, and, as his Custom was, he went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath-Day, and stood up to read* †, and, as we find in the Progress of the Chapter, he expounded a Portion of the Prophet *Isaiab* to his Hearers. Now did Christ thus show us an Example of keeping the Sabbath, and shall we that call ourselves his Disciples, neglect it? In vain is our Pretence to the Name of Christians if we do not trace the Footsteps of our illustrious Pattern, and Leader to Heaven. Either be content with the Characters, which I question not you will utterly dislike to be branded with, I mean, those of Infidels, and Heathens, or else with the Title of

* Matt. xxiv. 20.

† Luke iii. 16.

Christians join the holy Life of the High-Priest of our Profession. A SOCRATES, a PLATO, or a SENECA would have disowned those Persons for their Pupils who wallowed in Sensuality, and Lust: and will not CHRIST at the great Day disallow the vain Pretensions of such who call him *Lord, Lord, and do not the Things that he says?* And besides, should not the Example of Christ be recommended to, and copied by us from the Consideration of the immense Love, and Mercy he has shown to us? Is not his Dominion over us purchased by, and enforced in his Blood? If he has loved us and washed us from our Sins, shall he not rule us by his Laws, and shall not that Hand, that dispenses Pardon and Salvation, sway the Sceptre over us? What stronger Motives can there be to draw us than the Bonds of Love, and must it not be the most unkind and perverse Ingratitude that He who gave himself Soul and Body to be our Sacrifice should be defrauded of the Service of our Souls and Bodies, which are not our own but are bought with a Price? He that has rescued us from the Curse of the Law by being made a Curse for us, and he who has turned away from us the Sin-revenging Sword of Justice by sustaining the full Vengeance of it in his

own Person, should certainly be the Object of our Love, Obedience, and Praise.

3. The Promises of God are another Argument for the Sanctification of the Sabbath. There is a Promise that is interwoven with every Duty, as well as a Curse that is entailed upon, or rather ingrafted into every Sin. And what exceeding great and precious Promises are there that run, like Veins of Gold, throughout Scripture, for such as practise universal, constant, and chearful Obedience? But particularly the Sanctification of the Sabbath has a Train of Blessings connected with it. Thus says God by the Prophet, *Blessed is the Man that does this, and the Son of Man that lays hold on it, that keeps the Sabbath from polluting it, and keeps his Hand from doing any Evil* *. And again, *also the Sons of the Stranger that join themselves to the Lord to serve him, and to love the Name of the Lord, to be his Servants, every one that keeps the Sabbath from polluting it, and takes hold of my Covenant, even them will I bring to my holy Mountain, and make them joyful in my House of Prayer; their Burnt-offerings, and their Sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine Altar; for mine House shall be called an House of Prayer for all People* †. And, to

* If. lvi. 2.

† If. lvi. 6.

mention

mention no more Promises to a Sanctification of the Sabbath, God says to his ancient People, *If thou turn away thy Foot from the Sabbath*, the Expression seems to import not trampling upon, and prophaning it, *from doing thy Pleasure on my holy Day, and call the Sabbath a Delight, the Holy of the Lord, Honourable, and shalt honour him, not doing thine own Ways, nor finding thine own Pleasure, nor speaking thine own Words; then shalt thou delight thy self in the Lord, thou shalt find thy Delight in me the God of the Sabbath, and I will give thee to delight in the Abundance and Assurance of my Blessings; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high Places of the Earth, thou shalt subdue thine Enemies, and obtain the Possession of their strongest Bulwarks and Towers, and feed thee with the Heritage of JACOB thy Father*, that is, give thee a quiet and prosperous Settlement in the Country of thy Fathers, *for the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken it* *. The Blessings are ratified by the Declaration of that God who cannot lie. Since then there are these blessed Promises annexed to a dutiful Regard to the Sabbath, shall they not be powerful Arguments to our Duty? Are not the Promises of God the richest Treasures, and the most satisfying

* If. lviii. 13, 14.

Cordials of the Soul in its Progress through this mazy and painful Wilderness? Divine Promises are no empty Sound, and contain no Scantiness of Meaning, and in this Respect they infinitely exceed all the greatest and best Good that this World can bestow, that they never can decay, and that the fragrant Blessings folded up in them can never lose the least Degree of their divine Perfume, and Powers. How often have there been seen Christians that have been dying with the Relish of a Promise upon their Hearts, who have been calm and joyful amidst the Tortures and Pangs of a Dissolution, and have as Conquerors, and more than Conquerors, triumphed over Death? He that has an Interest in the Promises, has all Blessings either in Hand or in Hope, and may be said to be full, and even to abound; but he that is destitute of a Share in them is miserable amidst all his worldly Sufficiency, and, if he lives and dies in that State, he is miserable beyond Measure, and beyond Redemption.

4. The Threatnings of God should be a Motive to the Sanctification of the Sabbath. As Promises are the Nourishers of our Hopes, so Threatnings are the Springs of our Fear. Now that we might want nothing that is proper to excite us to the Sancti-

Sanctification of the Sabbath, God has been pleased to arm his Word with many Threatnings against the Transgressors of the Sabbath, as well as to enrich it in other Places with many Promises to them that love and reverence it. *Moreover*, says God by his Prophet *, *I gave them my Sabbaths to be a Sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them. But the House of ISRAEL rebelled against me in the Wilderness, they walked not in my Statutes, and they despised my Judgments, which if a Man do he shall even live in them, and my Sabbaths they greatly polluted; then I said I would pour out my Fury upon them in the Wilderness to consume them. And again †, I lifted up my Hand unto them also in the Wilderness, that I would scatter them amongst the Heathen, and disperse them through the Countries; because they had not executed my Judgments, but had despised my Statutes, and had polluted my Sabbaths, and their Eyes were upon their Fathers Idols. And again, God by another of his Prophets ‡, accuses and threatens the Israelites in the following awful Manner, Hear this, O ye that swallow up the Needy, even to make the Poor*

* Ezek. xx. 12.

† Ezek. xx. 23, 24.

‡ Amos viii. 4—10.

of the Land to fail, saying, when will the New-Moon be gone, that we may sell Corn? And the Sabbath that we may set forth Wheat, making the Ephah small, and the Shekel great, and falsifying the Ballances by Deceit? That we may buy the Poor for Silver, and the Needy for a Pair of Shoes; yea, and sell the Refuse of the Wheat. The Lord hath sworn by the Excellency of JACOB, surely I will not forget any of thy Works. Shall not the Land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwells therein? And it shall rise up wholly as a Flood; and it shall be cast out and drowned as by the Flood of EGYPT, and it shall come to pass in that Day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the Sun to go down at Noon, and I will darken the Earth in the clear Day. And I will turn your Feasts into Mourning, and all your Songs into Lamentations, and I will bring up Sackcloth upon all Loins, and Baldness upon every Head; and I will make it as the Mourning of an only Son, and the End thereof as a bitter Day. Upon this Passage let me make these two or three Remarks. The First is, that an Iniquity that is mingled and mentioned with the Sins of the Israelites in those Times, is that of counting the Sabbath a Drudgery. When will the Sabbath be gone? The Second Remark is; that the Misery that should be poured out

D

upon

upon the Land of *Israel* for the Breach of the Sabbath should be sudden, and severe; and Mr. *Lowth* in his Commentary upon the Place with just Reason observes, *that the Prophet, when he says it shall rise up wholly as a Flood, and it shall be cast out, and drowned as by the Flood of EGYPT, declares that the Calamity of an hostile Invasion by the ASSYRIANS shall be like an Inundation, which in a short Time overruns an whole Country, and that the Inhabitants of the Land shall be cast out of their Possessions, or the Land itself shall be swallowed up as EGYPT is by the Inundation of the River NILE.* The Third Remark is, that God in the most solemn Manner, by binding his Threatnings with his Oath, declares that he will punish these Iniquities; *The Lord hath sworn by the Excellency of Jacob, surely, &c.* That is, he hath sworn by himself who is the Glory of *Jacob*; and who shall not dread that Vengeance which is invironed with the Almighty's Oath? I will add one more Passage from the prophetical Writings to the present Purpose; *But if ye will not,* says God by *Jeremiah* *, *hearken unto me to hallow the Sabbath-Day, and not to bear a Burden, even entering in unto the Gates of JERUSALEM on the Sabbath-Day; then will I kindle a Fire in the Gates thereof, and it*

* Jer. xvii. 27.

shall devour the Palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched. Observe how strongly God represents the Judgments which should revenge the Prophanation of the Sabbath. In the Passage from *Amos* just cited, the divine Anger is compared to the boisterous Rage, and wasteful Ruin of a Torrent; and in the Passage in *Jeremiah* the divine Indignation is resembled to Fire that having mastered all human Controul with an impetuous and boundless Fury consumes the most sumptuous Buildings, and magnificent Cities. Or the Place in *Jeremiah* may be understood literally, and then it imports that devouring Fire, one of the most terrible Executioners of the divine Wrath, shall be let loose upon the Possessions of the Sabbath-Breakers. To these Threatnings let me subjoin something more than a Threatning, a Threatning fulfilled in a most tremendous Example of Divine Vengeance. *And while the Children of ISRAEL were in the Wilderness, they found a Man that gathered Sticks, on the Sabbath-Day; and they that found him gathering Sticks, brought him unto MOSES, and AARON, and unto all the Congregation. And they put him in Ward because it was not declared what should be done unto him. And the Lord said unto MOSES, The Man shall surely be put to*

*Death : All the Congregation shall stone him with Stones without the Camp. And all the Congregation brought him without the Camp, and stoned him with Stones, and he died, as the Lord commanded MOSES *. And now, O Sinner, shall not these multiplied and most awful Threatnings, and Threatnings fulfilled in Fact, sink with Weight into thy Soul? Is it a slight Matter to have a God, an Omnipotent God, incensed, and in Arms against thee? The Curses of the broken Law of God not only are charged with an heavy Artillery of Wrath for this World, but the fiery Indignation involved in them transcends the Bounds of Time, and extend themselves into the approaching Eternity, and in a Gulph of Fire and Brimstone, whose Smoke ascends up for ever and ever, must every impenitent Sinner take his final and unchangeable Abode. Think, think what it is to be an Exile from God, a Vessel of Wrath, and a Brand of everlasting Burnings? It may be thou flatterest thyself, that all these Denunciations are only scaring Sounds without any Reality of Woe, and Wretchedness in them, but be assured that all the Word of God is true, and the same immutable Faithfulness that is the Basis and Security of every Promise, is the Guardian*

* Numb. xv. 32.

of every Threatning, and inflexible Justice will ere long execute it in all its fiery Torrent upon the Head, and Heart of every Sinner. Knowing the Terror of the Lord therefore, that according to his Word so is his Wrath, that they hold an exact Proportion with one another, be persuaded to break off thy Sins by Righteousness, and keep holy the Sabbath-Day.

5. The Goodness of God should be an Argument for keeping the Sabbath. The great God, who, as he is the Author of our Lives, and the supreme Lord of his Creatures, might, had he been so pleased, have appointed six Days for his Worship, and but one in seven for our Labour for ourselves, or he might have equally divided our Time between his Worship, and our Calling, or at least he might have challenged a much larger Part than only a Seventh of our Time to be consecrated immediately to himself. But he gives us six Days for the Cares and Busineses of Life, for our selves and Families, and only demands that a Seventh should be devoted to him. Surely this is a Scheme of great Goodness, and shews us how much it was the kind Design of God to afford us Time sufficient for our worldly Interests, that so, our Employments being but seldom and shortly interrupted,

we might all of us have full Opportunity for providing for and supplying the Wants of the animal Life, and discharging the Duties that belong to our Fellow-Creatures. God has treated us, like a tender and indulgent Father, who is resolved in this, as well as in his other Appointments, to make his Commandments easy and gentle to us, and he shews that his Eye is not only fixed upon his Glory, but upon our Good, and indeed upon what is best for us in the present Relations, and Circumstances of our Being. And shall we now be so ungrateful to God as to defraud him of the whole, or any, though it be but the least Part of that one Day in Seven which he has sanctified for Himself? Is this a proper Return to so good a God? Are we so fond of the World, and the Employments, and Delights of it, that we dare to let them loose as so many sacrilegious Robbers upon this holy Day? Had God commanded us to have done some great Matter, ought we not to have done it, how much more when he says, *Remember the Sabbath-Day to keep it holy*? How little of God do we mingle with the other six Days; and what, shall we add this to all our Abominations, that we should banish him from his own Day, that Day that he has chosen for himself, and that

I should

should bear his Glory! Let the Goodness of God, O Sinner, lead thee to Repentance, and new Obedience!

6. The Pleasures of Holiness may be urged as an Argument for the Sanctification of the Sabbath. The Employments of a Sabbath will be considered when I come to enquire into the Nature of its Sanctification. Only let me say, though I am in some Degree preventing what I have to mention hereafter upon this Head, that they are Prayer, Hearing the Word, Reading, Meditation, Self-Examination, and the like devotional Exercises. And methinks these are very pleasing Engagements, and Duties that carry their Rewards in their own Acts, and pay and overpay the Observance of them in their own Performance. Methinks God seems to apprehend that Sabbaths were very valuable Enjoyments, (and surely his Judgment is according to Truth) from the Threatnings denounced against the *Israelites*, if they threw off their Allegiance to him. *And I will scatter you, says God; amongst the Heathen, and draw out a Sword after you; and your Land shall be desolate, and your Cities waste. Then shall the Land enjoy her Sabbaths, as long as it lies desolate, and ye be in your Enemies Land; even then shall the Land rest, and enjoy her Sabbaths.*

As

As long as it lies desolate it shall rest, because it did not rest in your Sabbaths, when ye dwell upon it *. God would never have spoken in such a Manner as to signify that the Want of a Sabbath was a great and sore Judgment; if he did not know that the free and quiet Fruition of it is a very important Blessing. *Jeremiab* reckoning up the Miseries of *Jerusalem* subdued and dismantled by the King of *Babylon* lays a deep Accent of Sorrow upon this Consideration, *That the Lord had violently taken away his Tabernacle, as if it were of a Garden; that he had destroyed the Places of the Assembly; that he had caused the solemn Feasts, and Sabbaths, to be forgotten in Zion, and had despised in the Indignation of his Anger the King, and the Priest; that he had cast off his Altar; that he had abhorred his Sanctuary; that he had given up into the Hand of the Enemy the Walls of her Palaces; and that they made a Noise in the House of the Lord, as in the Day of a solemn Feast* †. As for the Men of this World, who have all their Portion and their Hearts in it, they rather, I confess, esteem the spending of a Sabbath in the Worship of God to be a mere Task; and there cannot be a more disgustful, and painful Slavery than to serve God in the Exercises of his Appointment. They long to

* Lev. xxvi. 33, 34, 35. † Lam. ii. 6.

have the Sabbath over if they spend it in the Forms of Devotion, or, neglecting the very Outside of Religion, they endeavour to wing the tedious Moments that hinder them from their Trades, and that full Scope of Pleasure they indulge on other Days, by Walking or Riding abroad, Slumbering upon their Couches, or revelling over their Bowls in their own Houses. But let not the Disagreeableness of a Sabbath to a Sinner be ever admitted as a Proof that the Duties of Religion on a Sabbath-Day are burdensome in their own Nature, for as well might we allow that Dust and Ashes are good Diet, because some depraved Tastes may possibly like them, or that delicious Wines and Fruits are not fit for Nourishment, because there may be found Persons that have no Relish for them. There have been, and I trust still are, some Persons who are cloathed with their right Mind, and esteem the Sabbath a Delight; and though their Pleasures in the Observation of it have not always been the same in Degree, as who can always preserve the same holy Ardors in this Element of Sin and Sorrow, yet there has not perhaps, during the Succession of several Years, been a Sabbath that has passed over them, but what has contained some sacred Delight in it, and

and upon the Reviewal the Saint could say, *I had rather be a Door-keeper in the House of my God than dwell in the Tents, or even fill the Thrones of Wickedness* *; though at some Seasons he has rather wished he was able to say, instead of actually saying, *that a Day in God's Courts was better than a Thousand elsewhere*. There is an unspeakable Joy in Communion with God in Duty; and how delightful is it to feel our Knowledge of God increased, our Desires after him inflamed, our Hope in him exalted, our Faith in him strengthened, our Love to him enlarged, and so of the rest of the Divine Graces that form the new Nature? *Nay, even the worst of the Ways of God, as was the saying of an eminent Saint, are better than the best of the Ways of Sin*. To be humbled at the Footstool of our offended Father, to melt before him in the Tears of an Evangelical Repentance, and to abhor our selves under the overwhelming Apprehensions of the Divine Greatness, and Holiness, and the abasing Sentiments of our own Meanness, Unworthiness, Guilt, Pollution, and Wretchedness, are such Experiences that with all the Bitterness they carry in them are not only profitable, but pleasant; and by this spiritual Sadness, and Contrition the

* Ps. lxxxiv. 10.

Heart not only becomes better, but easier, it casts of its Load of Sorrow, and leaves itself chearfully and quietly in the Hands of a Sin-pardoning, as well as a Sin-hating, a Merciful, as well as an Holy God. Sinners they go no farther than the Shell of Ordinances, and no Wonder that they dislike them, but Saints taste the inward, and vital Substance, and finding God's Word they eat it, and it is to them the Strength and Joy of their Hearts, and the Law of Heaven *is sweeter than the Honey or the Honey Comb*, so that in the very Observance of it, *there is a great Reward* *. If Sinners had but the true Relishes of Pleasure, and did not foolishly and madly set up their Judgment as the Test of what is sweet and bitter, they would not be long before they joined Issue with a Person whose Capacities and Experience unquestionably transcended theirs, and whose Sentiments therefore should claim a superior Regard; who says, *that Wisdom's Way are Ways of Pleasantness, and that all her Paths are Peace; that she is a Tree of Life to them that lay hold upon her; and that happy is every one that retains her* †. Let Mire be the Swines Entertainment, Dust the Serpents Food, and let Corn, and Wine, and Oil be the

* Ps. xix. 10, 11.

† Pro. iii. 17, 18.

something,

something, though very little, higher Satisfaction of the Sinner, but the Saint will send his Eye and his Heart upward far above this temporary Scene, and earthly Region, and cry, *Lord, lift thou up the Light of thy Countenance upon me* *, let the blessed Beams of thy Love shine with unclouded Lustre, and an healing Virtue upon my Soul, *for in this thy Favour is Life, and thy Loving-Kindness is better than Life* †. The Heart touched and possessed with the attractive Influences of this celestial and eternal Good, tends to, and rests with, like the Needle in the Compass, its beloved Pole.

7. The Influence that the Spending of a Sabbath ordinarily has upon our Week-Days, should be an Argument for the Sanctification of it. I appeal to your own Experience, I speak to such as have felt the Powers of Religion, whether a Sabbath does not extend a vast Influence into the succeeding Week? And let your own Conscience resolve me the Question, whether a Sabbath, employed in the Worship of God, and Communion with him, does not generally introduce a Week of the same happy Tincture with itself; and though on the Six Days you are mingled with the Cares and Hurries of the World, yet the Remembrance and

* Ps. iv. 6.

† Ps. lxxiii. 3.

Relish of what you have been doing, and what you have enjoyed on the sacred Day, abides with you all the Week after. So Roses leave a rich Perfume when they are dead, and a full refreshing Meal strengthens the Heart, and recruits the Spirits for a considerable Season after. On the other Hand, if the Sabbath is unprofitably spent, if any Part of it is consumed in Vanity and Folly, and sees no Good, if there is not one Glimpse of Heaven to sanctify and irradiate its sacred Hours, what Dullness, and Darkness, rising, like thick Fogs, may I so speak, from this Mispendence of holy Time often overspread the following Days! How are we endangered by the first Sally of Temptation? How is our Strength lost, our Courage broken, and we that thought our Mountain stood strong, become like Chaff before the Storm? And I am persuaded that many many Persons have on the Week-Day been left to commit the most abominable Iniquities, and to throw away their Lives here, and, for ought we can hope to the contrary, their Souls forever, by Means of the Prophanation of the Sabbath; and this Sin has been the fatal Floodgate of their other flagrant Crimes, and present, and everlasting Wretchedness. Abuse of the Sabbath has

E

been

been the Groan of the Gallows *; and the first Beginning of that full Measure of Shame and Misery that close up the Days of the Victims of Divine and Human Justice has been dated from the Hour that the Bands of a religious Education were broke asunder, and the Cords of the Sabbath were cast away from them. Make a Breach upon the Sabbath, and what are you doing in Effect but making an Inroad upon Conscience for every Sin to follow? The Tie that held the Soul to the Forms of Godliness is dissolved, and the strong Bar that

* It was formerly known that Malefactors about to suffer Death used to acknowledge that Sabbath-Breaking was the Beginning of their Ruin; and it may be asked what is the Reason that we hear of few or none such Confessions now? To which I answer, and I think my Answer will be found to be solid upon Examination, that the Reason why Malefactors in our Days so seldom ascribe their Ruin to Sabbath-Breaking, is that our Age is grown abundantly more loose in Respect of the Sabbath than the Age before us, so that very few amongst the lower Ranks of Life especially are trained up in any Notion of the religious Observance of the Sabbath, and consequently the Persons from amongst them, (and they are the Persons in general that come to this wretched End) that are made the publick Examples of Death, cannot resolve the Occasion of their Ruin to the Neglect of the Sabbath, since they were never taught to observe it, I mean in the Manner either that God commands, or in which our Forefathers were accustomed to keep it.

prevented

prevented the Excesses and Outrages of Iniquity is thrown down, and what is next to be expected, but that such a Sinner, like one of the brutish Herd the Devil possessed, should be driven headlong down the steep Road to Destruction, rushing on from Sin to Sin with a violent and precipitate Career, till he is swallowed up, if Almighty Grace does not surprizingly prevent, in the Gulph of bottomless Perdition ?

8. And Lastly, Another Argument why we should keep the Sabbath, may be taken from the Observation of the Sabbath being an excellent Preparative for Heaven. A Sabbath is an Emblem for its sacred Rest of the everlasting Sabbatism that the Saints shall enjoy with God in Glory, *for there remains a Rest, or a Sabbatism*, as the Word might be translated, *for the People of God **, and the Continuance of this Sabbatism shall be everlasting, as we are abundantly assured from other Places of holy Writ. Now by a Sabbath we are making an Essay beforehand how we shall like constant Communion with God, and if we cannot spend one Sabbath with him on Earth in his Worship without growing weary of it, and intermixing, and enlivening, as we think, these sacred Hours with worldly Thoughts, Dis-

* Heb. iv. 9.

courses, and Pleasures, how shall we endure an Eternity of Service to, and Fellowship with God? Have we no Desires after a Ray of the Divine Countenance here, and is it a Pain to us to see through a Glass darkly, what then do we apprehend concerning the near Vision of God, when we shall behold him Face to Face, and shall be surrounded with the full Blaze of his eternal Glories? Are Duties that are measured only by a few fleeting Hours disgustful to us, and do they presently nauseate upon the Palate of the Soul, what do we think then (weigh, O Sinner, the important Thought) of seeing, adoring, and singing forth the Praises of God, and of the Lamb through the vast Round of Eternity? It is certainly a good Way for Persons to judge their State by, to enquire frequently, *How is it that I regard the Sabbath?* If our Souls cannot endure the House of God for one Day, if the Exercises of Prayer and Praise are dull, and languishing, (I mean habitually so) and we stretch our longing Wishes for the Close of them, how little prepared are we for the Society of the Blessed above; and it must inevitably, during this Posture of Mind, be a Torment, and a very Hell to us to be confined for ever to the Obedience, and Vision of God, upon Supposition that a distempered

Spirit

Spirit should obtain Entrance into Heaven. The Fulness of Joy in God's Presence, and the River of Water clear as Crystal proceeding from the Throne of God, and of the Lamb, would be to Sinners, Sinners that have no Inclination for, nay, are at perfect Enmity with Holiness, an unnatural Element, and you might as well think that the Worm and Mole, whose Dwellings are in the Earth, and that love to be buried there, would be delighted with inhabiting a pure Fountain of Waters, as that Sinners would be satisfied with the everlasting Pleasures at the Divine Right-hand. But if, on the contrary, we love the Sabbath, and are glad at its Return for the free and uninterrupted Enjoyments of the publick Ordinances, and other religious Exercises, though sometimes our Love is warmer, and sometimes cooler, it is a good Sign that we are born from above, that the Divine Nature, of which Saints are said to be Partakers, is formed in us; and it is a Thought that cannot be admitted, that we, who value the Service and mingle with the People of God on Earth, should ever be banished from the Worship and Congregation of Heaven. We have a true Taste, a Taste that belongs to, and distinguishes the Children of God; we esteem, we drink, we relish the Streams

that run in the Wilderness, and we may be assured that we shall ere long hear the blessed Plaudit, *Well done, good and faithful Servants, ye have been faithful over a few Things, I will make ye Rulers over many Things, enter ye into the Joy of your Lord **.
 “ Into that ye shall be received, and there be swallowed up for ever.”

Thus have I shown from a Variety of Arguments the Necessity, and Reasonableness of a Sanctification of the Sabbath.

I proceed

II. To consider the Nature of the Sanctification of the Sabbath. And

1. The Sanctification of the Sabbath lies in an Abstinence from all Manner of Work. Allow me again to repeat the fourth Commandment, and its Demands; *Remember the Sabbath-Day to keep it holy, Six Days shalt thou labour and do all thy Work, but the Seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any Work, Thou, nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, thy Man-Servant, nor thy Maid-Servant; nor thy Cattle, nor thy Stranger, that is within thy Gates, for in Six Days the Lord made Heaven, and Earth, the Sea, and all that in them is, and rested*

* Matt. xxv. 23.

the.

the Seventh Day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Seventh Day, and hallowed it. It is our Duty to work six Days in our worldly Callings, and whosoever they are that neglect their proper Employments of Life, reduce themselves and their Families by Idleness, and perhaps involve their innocent Neighbours in the same Poverty with themselves, are guilty of the grossest Iniquity in the Sight of God. *But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own House, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel **; as much as if the Apostle had said; “ All his loud Professions, and
 “ boasted Raptures of Faith have less real
 “ Title to Religion than the scanty Know-
 “ ledge, and faint Glimmers of natural
 “ Light in an Heathen, who sees it is his
 “ Duty, and observes it as such, to exercise
 “ a provident Care about his Household.” Nor will it be a sufficient Apology for these Neglecters of social Duty, that they were engaged in Reading, Hearing, Praying, or any publick, or private Acts of Devotion, when they should have been providing Things honest for the Service of their Families; for God will account these Plunders of Time from our civil Employments for his Worship no better than a vain Obla-

* 1. Tim. v. 8.

tion, nay we are doing no less a Crime than presenting God a *Robbery for a Burnt-Offering* *. But when the Day that is to be consecrated to God comes, if we dare to spend any Part of it in servile Work, or even so much as exact or expect any servile Work from our Children, or Servants, though our Servant be even no nobler a Creature than a Beast, we are guilty of a Trespas upon that Day, which should be observed as Holy to the Lord. God could not have delivered his Mind in more full and express Words concerning the Sanctification of the Sabbath, than what he has made Use of in the fourth Commandment; and the exact and particular Manner of God's declaring his Will upon this Point, abundantly shows how dear, and I might say peculiarly dear, the religious Observance of the Sabbath is to him. The Sabbath is a sacred Pause (and a Pause that bears Witness for God, how kind, and gracious he is to us) from the Train of hard Fatigues, and Cares which would otherwise extend with an uninterrupted Course through all our Days. God commands us to rest, and how grateful is the Rest to the Body! Strange then that we should wear such perverse distempered Souls, as that we should

* If. li 8.

hurt our own truest, and most evident Interests, at the same Time that we break the Fences of the Divine Command!

2. The Sanctification of the Sabbath consists in an Omission of worldly and sensible Pleasures. God has not separated a Day from the common Tract of Time for carnal but spiritual Delights; and, though the Sabbath proves a Day of Rest to the Body, and was designed for its Rest, yet the Rest of the Soul, an holy heavenly Rest with God, was the great End of the Institution of the Sabbath. Accordingly we are commanded *not to find our Pleasures on the Sabbath-Day* *. Diversions that may be lawful on other Days, are to be banished from our Sabbath; and that innocent Mirth which sometimes, under the Directions of Wisdom, and the Restraints of Moderation, may be indulged on other Days for the Refreshment of the Labours, and Softening the rugged Cares of Life, should be never seen or heard on this sacred Day, but should be all superceded by a reverend and devotional Speech, and Behaviour, not taken up by Hypocrisy, and saddened over with the Gloom of Melancholy, but the genuine and easy Product of

* Is. lviii. 13.

a serious, and sanctified Heart. That unbending Chearfulness which we carry about with us amongst our Acquaintance, would never appear upon our Countenances if we were called to attend the Court of an earthly Monarch; how much less do such Airs of Pleasantry upon our Faces become that high Day which is to be consecrated to God, and Christ, our Souls, and Eternity? And for the very same Reason ought we to omit that full Refreshment that our Bodies may take on other Days; and sparing Meals, both as to Meats and Drinks, are peculiarly suitable to the Sabbath, both as they make the least Demands upon our sacred Moments, and as the Soul is usually more fit for diligent and devout Attention after a very moderate Allowance of Food, than when we have supplied the Desires of animal Nature to their full Extent. And it is often known that great Listlessness, and Drowziness have been the Effects of, I will not say a voluptuous Luxury, for that is in itself unlawful, and consequently unlawful at all Times, but of a plentiful Nourishment on the Sabbath-Day. Many more Instances I might have mentioned of taking Pleasure on the Sabbath-Day. But I have specified *some* that may be reckoned the least criminal, and of Course exclude *others* that

are evidently more flagrant. But I may have Occasion to retouch this Point again in the Improvement.

3. The Sanctification of the Sabbath lies in the publick Worship of God. *Speak,* says God to *Moses, unto the Children of ISRAEL, and say unto them; concerning the Feasts of the Lord which ye shall proclaim to be holy Convocations, even these are my Feasts. Six Days shall work be done, but the Seventh is the Sabbath of Rest, an holy Convocation; ye shall do no Work therein: It is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your Dwellings **. The Sense of which Passage is, that the *Israelites* were to assemble on that Day for religious Worship, and devote in that Manner a considerable Part of the Sabbath to the Lord. The Offerings on the Sabbath were greater than those on common Days. *And on the Sabbath-Day two Lambs of the first Year without Spot, and two Tenth-Deals of Flower for a Meat-offering mingled with Oil, and the Drink-offering thereof. This is the Burnt-offering of every Sabbath, besides the continual Burnt-offering, and his Drink-offering †*. It is not at all improbable that *David* had a Regard to the publick Worship of God on the Sabbath when he says, *as the*

* Lev. xxiii. 2, 3. † Numb. xxviii. 9, 10.

Hart pants after the Water-Brooks, so pants my Soul after Thee, O God. My Soul thirsts for God, for the living God; when shall I come, and appear before God? My Tears have been my Meat Day and Night while they continually say unto me, where is thy God? When I remember these Things, I pour out my Soul in me; for I had gone with the Multitude; I went with them to the House of God; with the Voice of Joy and Praise, with a Multitude that kept holy Day.* And we find that the Jewish Synagogues were open on the Sabbath-Day, and that Christ honoured them with his Presence and Preaching. It is therefore our indispensable Duty to worship God in a publick Manner on the Sabbath-Day; and unless we have a Famine of the Word, which is one of the forest Judgments that God can inflict upon a Nation, City, or Neighbourhood, or unless we are the Prisoners of Providence, through Weakness, Pain, or some other Means that carry their own Necessity in the very Being of them, it must be a very bold Affront upon the Authority and Honours of our great Lawgiver to neglect social Worship on the Sabbath-Day. Has God appointed a Day for you to observe, and traced out the Methods in which it should be

* Ps. xlii. 1 — 4.

sanctified,

sanctified, and will you rebelliously set up your perverse Inclination against his royal Pleasure? The very *Heathens* will rise up in Judgment against us if we neglect the Sanctification of the Sabbath, for they had their holy Days, a Part of which was spent in Service and Sacrifice to their Gods. The *Turks* keep the Sixth Day of the Week, and the *Indians* the Fourth, how scandalous therefore must it be to the Christian Profession if we dare to neglect the Sabbath, we who have our Duty legible not in the feeble Light of natural Conscience only, but inscribed amidst the Sunbeams of Divine Revelation? Prophanes Abuse of Sabbaths, to let them come, and go, and never, or but rarely attend at the House of God! Surely he that gives us to dwell in our Houses in Peace and Plenty on the Six Days should see our Faces at his own House, and there receive our Thank-offerings for his Mercies on the Sabbath! And as the Divine Blessings are not thinly and slenderly distributed amongst us, but, like a broad River, pour out their Streams of Bounty and Joy far and wide, let us, thus united in the Reception of Blessings, unite in the rendering back our Obedience and Praise. The same may be said as to social Prayer; why should not general Wants and Sorrows ascend up to

F

God

God in a general Groan of Hope and holy Desire?

4. And Lastly, The Sanctification of the Sabbath consists in the Employment of that Part of it that is spared from publick Worship in the Exercises of Religion. I never read of any such Expression, and I am sure none can be found throughout the Book of God, as acquainted me that one Part of the Sabbath was holy, and the other common; or that after we have served God in Publick, we may wear out the Remnant of the Sabbath just as we might be allowed to spend an Hour of Leisure on the Week-Day. *Remember the Sabbath Day*, is the Divine Command, *to keep it holy*. And does not God speak plainly, and without a Figure, and can he therefore intend less than the whole Day? When God speaks of Six Days to do our Work in, is there any Person doubts whether God designs six whole Days, or only a Part of them? How then can it be reasonably questioned when God in the same Command speaks of a Sabbath-Day, whether he would have us understand a whole Day, or only a Division, and it may be the smallest Division of it? Christ when he was upon Earth vindicated his Acts of Healing on the Sabbath-Day from the Rescue that even the most scrupulous

pulous *Jews* were ready to perform towards a Sheep that was fallen into a Pit on the Sabbath-Day. Now had Christ apprehended that no more of the Sabbath was to be devoted to religious Purposes than the Time of publick Worship, would not Christ rather have said that the Time before, after, or between publick Exercises of Devotion was common, and therefore there was no Breach of the Sabbath in healing Diseases, and bidding Persons take up their Beds, and walk on the Sabbath Day? But not an Hint of this Nature can we once find, and the Silence of Christ upon this Point, I think goes no inconsiderable Way towards a Proof that Christ allowed that all the Hours of the Sabbath were to be consecrated to Religion. The Morning, Noon, and Evening are as sacred as the Seasons of publick Worship, and the Family and the Closet should be improved to water and nourish the Word we have heard in the House of God. Can it be reasonably supposed, that the bare Hearing of the best Sermons, or the mingling with the Minister and the Congregation in the best Prayers, are sufficient; and if they are not speedily and duly meditated upon, can we imagine that we are any better than the Way-side Hearers, whose

Seed, for Want of a Depth of Earth, presently became a Prey to the Enemy of all Righteousness, and the Destroyer of Souls? As *Protestants*, do we not disclaim the Notion of resting in the bare Performance of a Duty, and do we not plead, and that very justly, for the Spirit, as well as the Form of Devotion; and yet are we not overturning our own Sentiments if we think that the Attendance upon publick Ordinances is a full Sanctification of the Sabbath, though the other Portions of the Day are wasted away in Amusement, or Cares about the Body, and the World? Surely the Morning of the Sabbath should be ushered in with some such Contemplation as this: “ This
 “ is the Day that the Lord hath made, I
 “ will be glad, and rejoice therein: As the
 “ Rising of the natural Sun chases away
 “ the Darkness, and Fogs of the Night,
 “ so let the Sun of Righteousness arise
 “ this Day upon my Heart, with Light
 “ and Healing under his Wings.” Then should we prepare ourselves for Prayer by reviewing over our Sins, and Follies, with the Forbearance and Mercies of God throughout our Lives; and particularly should the last Week be laid under a severe Scrutiny, and thus shall we have a large Fund of Matter to be wrought up
 into

into Petition and Praise ; to which we may add a Representation at the Throne of Mercy of the Weaknesses of this and the other Grace, the Strength of this and the other Corruption ; the pressing Weight, and hard Onset of this and the other Trial, and Temptation, not forgetting at the same Time to bless God for the free Liberty of the Gospel, and his House, where it is dispensed, and our fervent Requests for the Vouchsafement of his Blessing upon the Means of Grace, which alone can render them effectual for the real Advantage of our Souls. To Prayer may be annexed Reading, either of a Portion of Scripture, or some devotional Writings, Singing of a Psalm, Meditation upon sacred Subjects, and the like holy Exercises, which may be extended or contracted according to the Opportunities we enjoy, be they more or less ; but, if possible, let there be a careful Reading of some Part of Scripture, and a Recollection upon it, since the Scripture is undoubtedly the Spring of all our Knowledge, and Hope of Salvation. Thus should we endeavour to improve the Morning of our Sabbath. At Noon when we return Home for the Refreshment of our Bodies, let us be still solicitous to find some Refreshment for our Souls. Our Converse at Table, or

in the short Season after our Meal, should roll upon some sacred and profitable Topic. The Sermon may be thought or discoursed over, and that with an Application of it to ourselves, as what belongs to us, and not only to others, and these Reviews will be of great Service, by the Blessing of God, to imprint what we have heard upon our Hearts, and we shall fasten the Nail, as with repeated Strokes, and with a deeper Hold, in a sure Place by these Recollections of Divine Truths. Hereby we give ourselves Time, and use the best Means to digest our spiritual Repast, and so turn it into true Nourishment, that we may thrive, and grow thereby. The very Provisions of our Bodies may suggest many useful Improvements, and our Bread, Water, or Wine, should be eyed as the Fruits of Divine Bounty, and should aid our Thoughts to arise to *Jesus*, the Bread and Water of Life, and should serve as a Kind of Symbols of the Fulness of Joy at our Father's Right-hand. And, if we conveniently can, let us retire into our Closets, and pray for a rich Increase of the Seed that has been already sown, a free opening of the Heart to receive the Seed that may be scattered on the future Part of that Day, and the Vouchsafement of the Dews
of

of Heaven, to intermingle with the one and the other. When the Afternoon Service is over, assemble your Families together, if you are placed by Providence at the Head of them, read some Part or other of the Word of God, or you may appoint your Children or Servants to this Duty; after this, though as to the Order of Succession there is nothing material, read over a Sermon of some easy, and pious Author; and of these, blessed be God, there is a suitable and large Provision, such as *Flavel*, *Manton*, *Charrock*, *Leighton*, and the other excellent Divines of the last Century, with several valuable and well-known Writers of the present Age. The Sermon may be followed with Family-Prayer, and at the Conclusion of it you may profitably mingle Voices and Hearts together in singing a Psalm or Hymn, and of these you have a most delightful Variety in *Dr. Watts's* Imitation of *David's* Psalms, and his Volume of Hymns; and I will add that the Hymns composed by *Mr. Mason*, though they are not distinguished with the sublimest Strains of Poetry, yet have such a warm Spirit of Devotion, and such a Fulness of sacred Energy in some Parts of them, that I should be glad if they were more generally known and used than they are in the present Days.

Shall

Shall I withhold saying, lest I should pain the Consciences of some of my Readers, that an Half-Hour after Family Worship may be suitably spent in Catechizing our Children and Servants? Or if Servants are not our Catechumens, should they not at least have a particular Share in our pious Regards, and may we not ask them whether they remember such and such a Part in the Sermons, whether they do not believe they are Sinners, whether they are not willing to escape Hell, and to get safe to Heaven, whether they can be saved without Faith, Repentance, and new Obedience; together with many other Questions, which a true Experience of the Work of Grace upon our own Hearts, and a tender Sense of the Worth and Danger of the immortal Souls that are committed to our Care, will readily and constantly supply? After these Duties are over, let us enter into our Closets, and there turn our Eye back with a full and accurate Survey of the Day, acknowledging the Divine Goodness, if we are grown any wiser and better by the spiritual Services we have enjoyed, lamenting our sinful Imperfections, and beseeching that a sacred Tincture may be carried into the ensuing Week, and mingled with its Concerns and Cares. And thus, after the Re-

freshment of our Bodies, a Refreshment
 not without spiritual Relishes, let us con-
 clude the Day, and it may be that some
 such Thoughts as these may be no improper
 Companions of our reposing Pillow. " My
 " Body, and my Soul have enjoyed a
 " Sabbath of Rest; my Body will ere long
 " have a Sabbath of Rest in the Grave,
 " and I hope that my Soul shall have a
 " Sabbath of Rest in Heaven, a Sabbath
 " that shall have no Sin to stain it, and
 " no Night to end it. Lord, I have
 " this Day been making an Essay how I
 " should wish the eternal Rest with thee.
 " Methinks I love the Duties of the Sab-
 " bath. I am loth to go down from the
 " Mount of Communion, and return to
 " the World. If I am *weary* in these sa-
 " cred Employments, yet I am now *weary*
 " *of them*. The Spirit is willing, but the
 " Flesh is weak. Happy Hour! when I
 " shall be set at Liberty from these Bonds
 " of Clay, and my Soul with unquench-
 " able Ardor, and uninterrupted Fruition
 " shall join the Company, and bear a Part
 " in the Services and Songs of the Saints
 " and Angels around thy Throne! I now
 " go from holy to common Time; ere long,
 " if I am a Saint, and methinks I have
 " something of the Temper of a Saint, I
 " shall

“ shall bid farewell to all Time, and in the
 “ Regions of a peaceful and glorious Eter-
 “ nity enter into the Joy of my Lord.”

Thus have I finished the Consideration of the two Heads I proposed, namely, to represent the Necessity, and Reasonableness of a Sanctification of the Sabbath, and afterwards to enquire into the Nature of its Sanctification.

Before I proceed to the general Improvement of the Subject, I shall endeavour to remove some Objections that may seem to weaken the Force of my Arguments, and resolve some Queries that may be pertinently suggested from what has been said.

Obj. 1. The Day of the Sabbath is changed ever since the Resurrection of Christ, from the Seventh to the First Day of the Week, and therefore the Arguments to enforce the Sanctification of the Lords-Day, derived from the Directions which God gave concerning the Observation of the Seventh Day, are of no Weight with us in the Times of the Gospel.

Answer. 1. That there are very probable Reasons * for us to conclude that there is

* I would have my Reader observe that I speak only with Probability upon the Point of the Change of the Sabbath ; for after much vexatious Doubt and diligent

is a Change of the Sabbath from the First to the Seventh Day, I am far from denying; but it cannot be inferred from hence that
the

diligent Searches upon this Head, I can go no further than Probability; and what has influenced my Judgment thus far, has chiefly arisen from these three Considerations. 1. It is evident that there were Assemblies for religious Worship on the First Day of the Week, Act. xx. 7. *And upon the first Day of the Week when the Disciples came together to break Bread Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the Morrow, and continued his Speech till Midnight.* From which Passage it is clear that the Disciples were assembled for religious Worship, for I think it will hardly be doubted whether the Breaking of Bread refers to the Sacrament of the Lords-Supper; and if this was the Errand of the Meeting, the Disciples met together to perform one of the highest Acts of Religion. Again, it is said expressly that this religious Meeting was held on the first Day of the Week. Now what can be the Reason of the first Day of the Week being specified by Name, if there was not some peculiar Sanctity in it? And if there was no more Reason for Assemblies for Devotion to meet on the first Day than there was for them to meet on the third, fifth, or sixth, or any common Day, how comes it to pass that the Day is mentioned in the Text at all? Or why might it not be said, that the Disciples were met together on a certain Day? And whence is it that the first Day is in this and some other Places of the New-Testament particularly mentioned, as 1 Cor. xvi. 2. whereas there is no such Mention made of the second, third, fourth, fifth, or sixth Days? From all which it seems probable that the first Day was set apart by the Christians in the Apostolick Age for publick, and so-
cial

the Sabbath is disannulled, or that we are not bound under the Gospel to consecrate
a seventh

cial Worship. And if so, as the Divine Command bids us work six Days, the Observation of the seventh is of Course abolished. 2. We find that the Apostle JOHN *was in the Spirit on the Lords-Day*, Rev. i. 10. Now what can be intended by the Lords Day? Not the seventh Day certainly, for that was usually called the Sabbath, and consequently the Title of the Lords-Day given to the Sabbath would rather cloud than clearly discover the Apostle's Meaning; and is it not probable that by the Lords Day is to be understood the first Day, the Day on which Christ arose from the Dead, since the Adjective *κυριακή*, which signifies the Lord's, is made Use of in another Place, and in more Places it does not occur, to express the Lord's Supper, 1 Cor. xi. 20. Now since the Lord's Supper unquestionably was instituted by Christ, is a perpetual Memorial of him, and therefore bears his Name, methinks there is a very strong Reason for us to conclude that the Lord's Day refers to our Lord Jesus Christ, and that, as it bears his Name upon it, it is consecrated to his Service, and Glory. 3. And Lastly, There is a Passage in Col. ii. 16. that seems to intimate the Abolition of the Seventh Day as a Sabbath. *Let no Man therefore judge you in Meat, or in Drink, or in Respect of an holy-Day or of the New Moon, or of the Sabbath-Days, which are a Shadow of Things to come, but the Body is of Christ.* By the Sabbath-Days we are probably to understand the weekly Sabbath, which was kept by the Jews on the seventh Day, or at least this weekly Sabbath is not excluded; and my Reason is founded not only upon the Term Sabbaths, but upon the Sabbaths being mentioned after the Apostle had spoken of the Holy Day, and the New-Moon. A-
gain

a seventh Part of our Time to God. If God alters our Sabbath from the Seventh

gain the Sabbaths *were a Shadow of things to come* : Now wherein was the weekly Sabbath a Shadow of Things to come, but as the Works that God ended on the Seventh Day, and for whose Remembrance the seventh Day was instituted, were a Shadow of the greater Works of Redemption, which were evidenced, and ratified by the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead on the first Day of the Week ? Further, it may be inferred from the Passage, that the Sabbath is in some Sense abolished, because *it is a Shadow, and the Body is of Christ*, and Christ we know is come in the Flesh. Now in what Sense is the Sabbath abolished except in a Discharge of the Seventh Day from the Sanctity that was given it by a positive Command, and the placing the Sanctity upon another Day, for that a Seventh Part of Time should be devoted to God in the Manner I have represented is undoubtedly our Duty under the Gospel ? And I add, that the Seventh-Day Sabbath may be supposed to be a very *suitable and pertinent* Umbrage, or Type of the Blessings that we receive by Christ, as it was ordained to commemorate the Works of Creation, and hereby shadowed forth the Wonders of Divine Power, and Love in Redemption ; and in this View the Words of the Apostle appear very clear and easy, *that the Body is of Christ*, that is, Christ by what he hath wrought out for us is become the Truth, and Substance of the Figures that pointed him to us.

These are the Arguments that have made it very probable to me, that there is a Change of the Sabbath from the First to the Seventh Day. However, I do not say that I am perfectly satisfied upon the Point, and I would not suffer my Words to import any Thing more than the real Sentiments of my Heart.

Day to the First, is not the First a Sabbath-Day still, and what Conclusion can be drawn from the Abolition of the Holiness of one Day, and the Transferring of it, may I so speak, to another, that therefore there is no Day Holy? And methinks if we observe a Day sacred to Redemption, that greatest of Divine Works, and much more astonishing and fuller of the Riches of Divine Love than the Work of Creation, there is as much, or rather more Necessity laid upon us than ever to keep holy a Day to the Lord.

Answer 2. If we were not to derive our Directions as to the Observance of the Sabbath from the Old Testament, I intend not the ceremonial Directions for they of Course vanish with the *Mosaick* Dispensation, but the essential Directions, that regard the keeping holy the Sabbath-Day, I ask where shall we find our Rules for sanctifying the Sabbath, for the New Testament speaks very sparingly upon this Point, and the Sanctification of the Sabbath is no where, as I remember, either in our Lord's Discourses, or the Epistles of his inspired Apostles, represented in any Length and Particularity? The Consequence of which would be, if we were not to borrow an assisting Light from

from the Old Testament, that we should not find sufficient Directions for the Consecration of the Sabbath to the Lord, and I hope that none who make this Objection are for removing the antient Land-Marks, and overthrowing the most fundamental, and necessary Part of practical Religion. I look upon this Matter to stand in much the same Point of View with forbidden Marriages. That there should be no Incest committed is a Matter settled with us beyond all Question, but where shall we find Incest forbidden but in the Old Testament, I mean forbidden with an accurate Recital of what is Incest, and what is not, from whence we may clearly gather our Sin and Duty? Now if the Precepts given to the *Jews* concerning Incest are still in unchangeable Obligation, why should we imagine that the Rules concerning the Sabbath have not an immutable Constraint upon our Consciences, as well as upon the Consciences of the *Jewish* Nation to whom they were particularly directed?

Answer 3. Although the fourth Commandment be something altered, so as that the First Day shall be the Day of Holiness in the Room of the Seventh, yet what Warrant is there for a total Repeal of it, so as

that a seventh Part of Time shall not be separated for religious Purposes in the Manner that is there described? The Change of the Day is supported, say the Observers of the First Day, from the Example of the primitive Christians; but what colourable Reason can be produced from either the Old or the New Testament for the Dissolution or Abatement of our Obligations to keep holy a Day to the Lord? The Season is but a Circumstance, though it requires a Divine Authority to alter the Sabbath only in that Respect, but that a Seventh Portion of our Time should be devoted to God is a Matter of the greatest Consequence; and nothing appears, that I know of either from Scripture or the Light of Nature to favour an Opinion that a seventh Day should not be kept holy to the Lord, and if a Day is to be kept holy how can it be done without a Conformity to the Institutions of the Old Testament upon this Point?

Object. 2. The Gospel is a Dispensation of more Liberty, and therefore we may abate several Striētnesses that were not allowable in the JEWISH Times.

Answer. It is granted that the Gospel abounds with more Liberty than what was enjoyed under the *Mosaick* Dispensation, but

but it is not a Liberty that has the least Tendency to a Licentiousness in Practice, but a Liberty that is in its own Nature admirably adapted to promote Holiness. The Liberty that the Gospel brings, is a Freedom from the Ceremonial Observances, a Yoke that *neither our Fathers*, as the Apostle speaks, *nor we were able to bear*; * but it by no means discharges us from our Service to God, the Spiritual Service of an holy Heart, and holy Life, but rather opens a new Spring of Motives to excite, and encourage both the one, and the other. Was this Suggestion founded upon Truth, we should be apt to infer that *the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God* † which is spoken of as a Blessing still to come, was a greater Liberty than what we are allowed at present by the Relaxation of some Commands or other that are at present bound upon us, and thus with the increasing Discoveries of Divine Grace, we should have a further Release from the Divine Precepts, and Precepts that are evidently moral, till Liberty having come to its full Height, we should at last be left in uncontrollable Licence to do whatsoever we pleased. Which Sentiment is to the last Degree detestable, and

* Acts xv. 10.

† Rom. viii. 21.

in Proportion such must be every Notion that borders in the least upon it.

Obj. 3. and Lastly, The Manner in which the Sanctification of the Sabbath has been represented, has a strong Tincture of Superstition in it, for where can we find any Precepts to bind us to those particular Forms of Godliness that have been prescribed in the Religious Observation of the Sabbath, so far as what has been said regards the Spaces before, after, and between the Exercises of publick Worship?

Answer. I grant that the particular Method I have recommended for the Sanctification of the Sabbath is not written expressly in the Word of God. But yet the substantial Duties I have urged are all of Divine Institution, as Reading, Prayer, Instruction, and the like devotional Exercises, and therefore there is nothing that may properly be called my own Invention, but the Disposition of the Duties in what I thought an orderly Train, and in such a Manner as I apprehended would most conduce to the Spiritual Benefit of the Observer of the Sabbath. And if any Persons can find out a more edifying, and improving Method of sanctifying the Sabbath, I contend not for the Scheme I have drawn, but willingly resign it to the Admission of a better. But let not any think that there is
Ground

Ground for a Charge of Superstition; for every Person that sanctifies the Sabbath takesome Tract or other, which is no more planned in Scripture perhaps than mine, and consequently if the Directions I have pointed out favour of Superstition, all other Directions will be liable to the same Censure. Let Persons consult their Situations in Life, the Word of God, and the Dictates of a Conscience enlightened thence, and practise accordingly, and the Lord be with them!

From the Objections, and their Answers I go on to two Queries, both of which have a near Reference to the Sanctification of the Sabbath, and are very proper to be considered by us.

Query I. *Whether we are not allowed to perform Acts of Necessity and Mercy on the Sabbath-Day?*

To this Query I answer in the Affirmative.
 1. Acts of Necessity are to be performed on the Sabbath-Day. Eating and Drinking for the Support of our Bodies, putting on a decent Apparel for our Attendance upon publick Worship, the Use of Beasts to carry us to the House of God, if we cannot conveniently reach there without their Assistance; I say, these and many more such like Actions, are undoubtedly warrantable
 on

on the Sabbath. And my Arguments are founded not only upon the Nature of the Things themselves, and the absolute Silence of Scripture as to any Prohibition upon these Points, but the Allowance of a Sabbath-Days Journey under the Law *, Christ's going to the House of a Pharisee on the Sabbath to dine with him †, and upon his Vindication of his Disciples from any Breach of the Sabbath when they went through the Corn-fields, plucked, rubbed, and eat the Ears on the Sabbath-Day ‖.

* Mr. Ainsworth in his Annotations upon Exod. xvi. 29. where it is commanded, *abide ye every Man in his Place, let no Man go out of his Place on the Seventh Day*, thus speaks; the Sabbath was sanctified with an holy Convocation, or Assembling of the People in Synagogues, Lev. xxiii. 3. Acts xv. 21. This Place therefore whereto God restrains them, was not their private Tents, but the Camp of Israel; out of which they might not go on the Sabbath. From hence the Hebrews gathered a general Prohibition of going out of Town on such Days; and held it unlawful to travel beyond the Suburbs of any City, which Suburbs they set to be two thousand Cubits from the Law, Numb. xxxv. 3. and a like Space was between the Ark of God, and the People at their Passage over Jordan, Jos. iii. 4. Kimchi in his Annotations on Ezek. xlviii. 7. says two thousand Cubits are a Mile; meaning an Italian, or English Mile. Hereupon in the Apostles Days the Speech was common of a Sabbath-Days Journey; and so far Mount Olivet was from Jerusalem, Acts i. 12.

† Luke xiv. 1.

‖ Luke vi. 1.

2. Acts

2. Acts of Mercy are to be performed on the Sabbath-Day. God, who allowed that Men should feed, and water their Beasts on the Sabbath-Day * without Question allows that we should eat and drink on the Sabbath-Day, and eat and drink what is sufficient for the Satisfaction of our Hunger and Thirst. Christ healed the Sick, and the Lame on the Sabbath, *and bid them take up their Beds and walk* †; and consequently we may without a Shadow of Sin visit and tend the Sick, and call in the Advice of the Physician, and practice other proper Means for their Recovery on the Sabbath. Should a Neighbour's House take Fire on the Sabbath, it would be no Violation of its Sanctity to endeavour by all possible Methods to extinguish the Flames. Should our Enemies break into our Borders, I cannot apprehend we should contract any Sin if we not only opposed their Attacks, but even attacked them, if a favourable Opportunity should present it self. The Destruction of *Jericho* was probably on the Sabbath, or if by the Seventh Day, on which the *Israelites* made a Conquest of it, be meant only the Seventh Day from the Time in which they first encompassed it, and which therefore might or might not be

* Luke xiii. 15.

† Joh. v. 8.

on the Sabbath, yet so much is to be gathered that the *Israelites* encompassed the City on the Sabbath, for one of the Seven Days must be the Sabbath, as it is told us, they surrounded the City seven Days *. And without Question there are many more Acts of Mercy that may be done on the Sabbath, though there is an evident Toil, or Interruption of Divine Service in them; but they are too numerous distinctly to specify, and they must be left to the Word of God, and the Dictates of a Conscience thence enlightened, to adjust, and determine. *For God will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice*, as our Lord speaks, when applying a prophetic Passage to support the just Liberties of the Sabbath †. *And the Sabbath was made for Man, and not Man for the Sabbath* ‡. Only take heed lest under the Colour of maintaining the Lawfulness of Acts of Necessity, and Mercy on the Sabbath, you do not make any sinful Inroads upon the appointed Sanctification of the Day. *Ye have been called unto Liberty, only use not Liberty for an Occasion to the Flesh* §.

Query II. *The Kindling of Fires, and the Baking or Boiling of our Food were disallowed of under the Law*, *Exod. xxxv. 3. and*

* *Jos. vi. 14.* † *Matt. xii. 7.* ‡ *Mark ii. 27.*
§ *Gal. v. 13.*

Exod. xvi. 23. *may they be practised under the Gospel?*

I will return a distinct Reply to the two Branches of this Query. 1. The Kindling of Fires it may be pleaded was unlawful under the Law, Exod. xxxv. 1, 2, 3. *And MOSES gathered all the Congregation of the Children of ISRAEL together, and said unto them, These are the Words that the Lord hath commanded that ye should do them. Six Days shall Work be done, but on the Seventh Day there shall be to you an holy Day, a Sabbath of Rest to the Lord; whosoever does Work therein shall be put to Death. Ye shall kindle no Fire throughout your Habitations on the Sabbath-Day.* The Words, I confess, appear to be exprefs and full to the Purpose for which they may be urged, but we must borrow a Light in order to discover the true Meaning of them from the surrounding Connection. And let it be observed that the Command for the Observation of the Sabbath had been given before with the most awful Solemnity from the Mouth of God *. It seems therefore that something extraordinary must be the Reason that induced *Moses*, after the Publication of the Law concerning the Sabbath, in this Place to issue forth a Command concerning the Sabbath, and that after a Summons of, and in the

* Exod. xx. 8.

Hearing of the Congregation, and especially as the Command came alone without any moral Precepts besides to accompany it. And methinks this extraordinary Reason will not be hard to find, if we consider that the three Verses I have cited usher in the Direction about the Building of the Tabernacle, a Work of great Cost, and Labour: for was there not a prudent Necessity for *Moses* to collect the *Israelites* together, to tell them that no Work must be done on the Sabbath-Day, and particularly that no Fire (that is, for Work) should be kindled on the Sabbath-Day, before he proceeded to give his Instructions for the Framing of the Tabernacle? Hereby all Danger of the *Israelites* providing for, or working upon the Tabernacle on the Sabbath was guarded against; for Danger there might be, as they might imagine, some of them at least, that there was no Breach of the Sabbath in employing their Labours on that Day in making so holy a Place as the Tabernacle of the Lord. And if this is the Sense of the Passage, as methinks there is no small Probability to favour it, the Kindling of Fires on the Sabbath for the Refreshment, and Comfort of our Bodies, is by no Means forbidden. And I would add, that there is no Passage besides this that occurs to my Mind

Mind that seems to discountenance the Kindling of Fires on the Sabbath; and, may I not observe farther, that in these cold and changeable Climates the Kindling of Fires on the Sabbath is as great an Act of Necessity, and Mercy, as Attendance upon the Sick, Eating, or Drinking, since if we had not the Benefit of Fires on the Sabbath, the Health and Lives of many Persons, at least, would be evidently endangered.

2. The Baking or Boiling of our Food it is pleaded were unlawful under the Law. *Exod. xvi. 23. And he, that is MOSES, said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, To Morrow is the Rest of the holy Sabbath to the Lord; bake that ye will bake to Day, and seethe that ye will seethe, and that which remains over, lay up for you to be kept until the Morning.* For the right Understanding of this Passage let it be observed, 1. That it will not perhaps be found upon diligent Consideration that here is any Prohibition of Baking or Boiling on the Sabbath. Says *Moses*, endeavouring to persuade the People to gather a double Quantity of Manna on the Sixth Day for the Demands of the ensuing Sabbath, *bake that ye will bake (to Day is not in the Original, though I think it is properly supplied) and seethe that ye will seethe, that is, bake*

H

and

and boil to Day what you think proper of the Manna, *and that which remains over lay up for you to be kept until the Morning.* The Residue is only mentioned, and whether the remaining Manna was to be reserved baken, or unbaken, boiled, or unboiled, is not specified. 2. Admitting that there is a Prohibition for the Baking, or Boiling of Manna, yet let it be considered that it could be conveniently prepared on the Day before the Sabbath, and that it was not probably of any great Moment whether Manna was eaten cold, or hot, since Cakes were made of it *, and it evidently served in the Place of Bread. Just as our Bread may be prepared on the Day before the Sabbath, and it makes little Alteration as to the Benefit we receive by it, whether we eat it hot from the Oven, or not. But as to other Provisions, (and if Providence gives them us, why should we not enjoy them on the Sabbath, for the Sabbath was never designed, as I can find, for a Retrenchment upon our moderate Eating and Drinking?) I say, as to other Provisions, it is of Importance to us, as to their true Refreshment, as well as grateful Relishes, that we receive them warm. The Inference therefore is, that it does not follow from the Prohibition that

* Num. xi. 8.

Manna should be prepared on the Sabbath, that no Provisions should be baked, or boiled on the Sabbath. The utmost that the Argument can extend to by a Parity of Reason is, that the Food that can be conveniently baked, or any other Way prepared on the Day before the Sabbath, provided the Benefit, whether it be eaten cold or hot, be much the same to us, I say, that this Food should be got ready before the Sabbath. I add farther, that there is some Probability that the *Jews* were allowed to dress their Provisions, at least some Part of them on the Sabbath, from our Lord's being at a Feast, or at least a very plentiful Table, on the Sabbath-Day *. But after all, supposing that the *Jews* were not allowed to dress their Provisions on the Sabbath, yet the Practice may not be wrong in Christians in these Countries that are so much exposed to Cold, and the sudden, and unwholesome Variations of Weather; and therefore though we are, according to what has been proved, to fetch our Rules for the Sanctification of the Sabbath from the *Jews*, yet it does not follow, that this or that particular Direction that God gave them may not be remitted, not through an Abrogation of the Directi-

* Luke xiv. 1—12.

on it self, but through a Change of Circumstances, so that what was no Act of Necessity or Mercy with the *Jews*, now becomes an Act of Necessity or Mercy with us, and is consequently warrantable for us to perform, though it was not for the *Jews*. So the Precept maintains an unchangeable Sanctity that we are to do no Work on the Sabbath, but yet, through the Force of Necessity, Physicians and Apothecaries may be allowed to take long Journies, or make up their Medicines on the Sabbath-Day.

Having considered the Queries which I proposed, I now come to the general Improvement of the Subject. And this I shall attempt in several Uses.

Use I. Of Information. And

1. If we are to abstain from Work on the Sabbath, then it is unlawful to buy and sell, on this holy Day. This is nothing else than Trading, and though it is not so much a Work of our Hands, yet it may probably devour as much of our Time and Thoughts as if we were toiling at the Plow, or sweating at the Anvil. Is it not expressly said that on the Sabbath *we should not do any Work*, any Thing that has the Nature or Appearance of Work? Did not the Children of JUDAH *when they recovered from their Captivity,*

*tivity, enter into a solemn Covenant that they would walk in God's Law which was given by MOSES, and amongst other Commands that they would keep holy the Sabbath, and that if the People of the Land brought Ware, or any Viſtuals on the Sabbath-Day to ſell, that they would not buy it on the Sabbath **. How bravely, and awfully does NEHEMIAH remonſtrate againſt the Prophanation of the Sabbath by Traffick, and he reſolves the Calamities that had diſmantled *Jeruſalem*, cut off a great Part of the Inhabitants by the Sword, and enſlaved the Remnant in a long and heavy Captivity, into the Abufe of the Sabbath by Buying and Selling on that Day. *Did not your Fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this Evil upon us, and upon this City? Yet ye bring more Wrath upon IſRAEL by prophaning the Sabbath †*. A Prophanation of the Sabbath in this Manner is nothing leſs than waking the ſleeping Thunders of Divine Vengeance, and opening a freſh Source for divine Judgments to pour abroad, and lay waſte Cities and Kingdoms. As we value therefore the publick, as well as our own perſonal Welfare, let us avoid all Exerciſe of Trade, on the Sabbath, for hereby we give Proof that we are the beſt Patriots, as well as give an Evidence

* Neh. x. 31.

† Neh. xiii. 18.

amongst others that we are true Christians.
 2. We infer further that it must be sinful to demand, expect, or connive at the Profanation of the Sabbath by our Children, and Servants. How many Persons are there, as there is too much Reason to suppose without any Infringement upon Charity, who, though they will not, from Motives best known to themselves, openly profane the Sabbath themselves, are negligent and remiss about the Observation of the Sabbath by their Children and Servants? Their Children shall be little watched over, their Men and Maid Servants less, and as to their Beasts that should enjoy Rest in the Stable or the Pasture, they shall be lent or let out upon Errands of mere Pastime, or without any warrantable Occasion of Necessity, or Mercy: And thus the Day on which the brutal Creation should find a pleasing Interruption of their hard Drudgeries, shall be of all the Days of the Week the most grievous, and bitter Day of Bondage. And is not all this contrary to the Command of God? If Children and Servants may be allowed to find their Pleasures on the Sabbath Day, or if it is lawful they should be employed in Service, why is it that you lay a Restraint upon your own Pleasures, and why are you not pursuing your worldly

worldly Interests, and Business? But if Children and Servants are really contracting Guilt in their Sports and Labours, how dare you to connive at Iniquity? And can you answer it to Conscience that you do not interpose that Authority over them that Providence has vested in your Hands, and whose Omission, and Silence no Pleas whatsoever are sufficient to justify? You know that *Eli* was severely punished by God for not exerting his Parental Power to check the outrageous Wickedness of his Sons, and his feeble Expostulations with them, *My Sons, why do ye such Things* *, though they were mingled with sincere Desires without Doubt of their Reformation, were short of those Acts of righteous Zeal and Punishment, which God expected at his Hands. *I know ABRAHAM, says God, that he will command his Children, and his Household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment that the Lord may bring upon ABRAHAM that which he hath spoken of him* †. Should you not be glad of such an honourable Commendation from God, but how can you hope for it unless you follow the Steps of that illustrious Father of the Faithful? There is such a Thing

* 1 Sam. ii, 23.

† Gen. xviii. 19.

as being Partakers of the Sins of others *. Such is the Case of Ministers who shun to declare the whole Counsel of God; and God threatens *that if Ministers do not speak to warn the Wicked from his wicked Way to save his Life that the same wicked Man shall die in his Iniquity, but that his Blood shall be required at the Ministers Hand* †. And are you not Sharers in the Crimes of your Children, and Servants, if you gather not up the Reins of Government into your Hands, and curb these outward Acts of Wickedness, and particularly the Prophanation of the Sabbath, of which your Eye and your Ear cannot but be the Witnesses? And can you, the unconcerned Spectators of your Servants and especially your Childrens Iniquities, bear the anguishing Thought of mingling with them in the Flames of eternal Misery, and having this Energy of Woe added to your other Torments, the everlasting Curses of your Children upon your own Heads for not training them up in the Way in which they should go? The Minds of your young Offspring are ready enough to open in the poisonous Weeds of Sin; and Satan and the World are endeavouring betimes to strengthen, and nourish them, and shall you then, you on whom God

* 1 Tim. v. 22. † Ezek. iii. 18.

has laid his strongest Commands, and *you* in whom Nature has knit its closest Ties, shall *you* be inattentive, and negligent in dis-appointing their dangerous Snares, and preventing, in a Dependence upon Divine Grace, that Harvest of Grief, and desperate Sorrow which you may expect will in the End be reaped not only by your Children, and surely this is a sad Consideration, but by your own selves? Exert therefore your selves in ruling your Household well, and reckon that God puts the Bridle over their Actions into your Hands, though the Change of the Heart is the Product of his own Almighty Grace. And let me add, that the Groans of your Beasts that are oppressed with unnecessary Labours enter into the Ear of the Lord of the Sabbath, and will one Day be recompensed upon your own Heads in the Pains of an eternal Vengeance. Your Beasts are not allowed their Rest, nor *shall you rest Day or Night in that bottomless Pit, the Smoke of whose Torment ascends up for ever and ever* *.

3. We infer that if we are to abstain from all Work on the Sabbath-Day, that we ought not to busy our selves in framing Schemes how our worldly Business and Affairs shall prosper on that holy Day.

* Rev. xiv. 11.

The Thouuhts are the Embryos of Action, and the Embryos of Sin. And that God whose Eye searches the Soul through all its profoundest Powers, and most coloured Disguises, principally regards the Heart, and thence forms his Estimate of us whether we are Saints or Sinners; *A good Man out of the good Treasure of his Heart brings forth good Things, and an evil Man out of the evil Treasure brings forth evil Things**. *The broken and contrite Heart, are the Sacrifices that he accepts†*. *The Gift of the Heart is his Challenge upon us §*. And in the humble Heart he takes up his Dwelling ||. Consequently it is not enough that on a Sabbath our Words and Actions should be blameless, or should seem to run in a Stream of Piety, but our very Thoughts should be consecrated to God and his Glory. Can we then flatter our selves that we observe the Sabbath according to the Divine Appointment, and Expectation, if our Meditations, instead of rising in holy Ardors, and Aspirations to Heaven, are pinned down to this Orb of Vanity, and are wasting themselves upon the low Concerns of Sense and Time? Is it fit that we should be cumbered, torn and distracted in our

* Matt. xii. 35.

§ Pro. xxiii. 26.

† Psal. li. 17.

|| Is. lvii. 15.

Minds about many Things, when God demands our whole Attention, the full Current of our Souls, to the one Thing needful? Is it becoming that we should bear the World upon our Hearts, when we make our Approaches to, and profess that we are seeking the Converses and Communications of the Throne? Shall an unhallowed Flight of impertinent and earthly Thoughts be allowed to light upon our Sacrifices, and pollute their ascending Flames? Does not God complain of this Sin? *And they come unto thee, they are the Words of God to his Prophet, as the People comes, and they sit before thee as my People, and they hear thy Words, but they will not do them; for with their Mouth they show much Love, but their Heart goes after their Covetousness**. That is, “at the very same Time that Prayers
 “and Praises sit upon their Lips, their
 “Hearts are wedded to, and wandering
 “after the World, and they are contriving
 “and raising Schemes, how their Corn,
 “their Wine and their Oil, shall be increased: while they pretend to be seeking
 “the Light of my Countenance to be lifted
 “upon, and shine abroad over their Souls.”
 ’Tis sinful at any Time to be thoughtful about the uncertain Morrow, and to be build-

* Ezek. xxxiii. 31.

ding a tall Superstructure of worldly Felicity upon the wavering Sands of future Days, Months and Years, but it is doubly criminal to roll a Tide of Cares about the Morrow into the holy Rest of the Sabbath, and lay waste those opening Blooms of Righteousness and Joy, which it is our Business to watch over and cherish on that sacred Day. What sad Parentheses, and Interlinings of earthly Thoughts, is it to be feared, are found in most of our holy Duties, and how should we blush even now to read over the Memorial that God keeps of all and each of them ; how then can we bear the Thought of seeing the Register unfolded before Angels and Men at the last Day? *For God will bring every Work into Judgment, and every secret Thing, whether it be good or Evil* *. Pardon, O Lord, our past sinful Follies in these Instances, and give us thy Grace to avoid them for future Days, if future Days are allotted for us in these Regions of Change, and Death!

4. We infer that if we are to abstain from carnal Pleasures on the Sabbath, and that if we are to devote the whole Day to the Lord, that it must be unlawful to take our Diversions in our Houses, or Taverns, or the Fields on the Sabbath-Day. 1. Tak-

* Eccles. xii. 14.

ing our Diversions in our own Houses must be sinful. I have heard that some Households are guilty of such notorious Breaches of the Sabbath that some of the sacred Hours are spent in Cards and Dice, and that too with the Addition of many Guests called in from abroad to increase the Pastime, and alas! to bind the Guilt, though they little regard it, unspeakably heavier upon their Souls. Horrible Abuse indeed, that Games that are wisely thought so dangerous on common Days, as even to come under the Censures of Magistracy, should be the Sport for a Sabbath! Other Families it may be are consuming many precious Minutes of the Sabbath over their Cups and Glasses, and it may be rather apprehended at the Close of the Sabbath, that they were the Servants of BACCHUS, and had been celebrating his drunken Rites, than Sanctifying a Day to the LORD, and growing in any Meetness for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. Other Houses, it may be, and the Houses too of Professors, resound with the loud Laughter of Jest, or eccho with the bitter Invectives of Scandal, a Train of pleasant Tales, or a long Discourse upon Trifles, all of which Ways of passing away the Sabbath have no other Tendency than to alienate the Mind from Devotion, erase the

I

Impres-

Impressions that have been made under the Word, and more than ruin all the Appearances of Good that may have been received. What is this Course better than rooting out the Seed as soon as it is sown, and even preventing our worst Enemy from his mischievous Endeavours of *catching away that which was sown in the Heart* *? This is not gathering up the Fragments of our holy Time that nothing may be lost, which, as has been shown, is our Duty, but it is pouring out our golden Sands, Sands that will be gathered up, and add, a dreadful Weight to our total Amount of Guilt without speedy Repentance, Reformation, and Forgiveness with God.

2. Taking our Diversions in Taverns, Alehouses, &c. must be sinful. This, this is a crying Iniquity in our Days, and for it our Hearts should mourn in Secret, and our Eyes be a Fountain of Tears. How many are there that on the Sabbath ride or walk abroad into the Country, or the near Neighbourhood of this City, and there in Taverns, Alehouses, &c. make a Sacrifice of their Sabbath to their Pleasures and Lusts. Not a Word of God or Religion enters their Ears, or comes off their Lips, except in Prophanation of the tremendous

* Mat. xiii. 19.

Name

Name of God, and in a Volley of Scoff and Ridicule upon those narrow-souled melancholy Creatures, who restrain themselves from the Delights they enjoy, and are slowly numbering their sad Hours at Church, and Devotion. This is Wickedness of a Scarlet Dye indeed! nothing can import greater Insolence against the God of the Sabbath. 'Tis turning our Backs upon the Ways of Holiness, 'tis casting off the very Form of Religion, and saying to God with a Sovereign Defiance, *Depart from us.* O that such notorious Transgressors would but think that e're long he will turn their Choice into their eternal Doom, and return Answer, *Depart thou cursed* *. Though Things may for this short Hour of Time run on smooth, and peaceable, yet God is filling up the Vials of his Anger in answerable Proportion to the increasing Measures of their Iniquity, and when their Iniquity has come to its full Height, the Divine Indignation will have reached its last Limit of Forbearance, sweep them away from the Land of the Living, and rain down upon them Fire, Brimstone, and an horrible Tempest: This shall be the Portion of their Cup †, a Cup how different from that of their present Pleasure, a Cup deep and large, and full of the unmingled Wrath of

* Mat. xxv. 41.

† Ps. xi. 6.

their God. 3. Taking our Diversions in the Fields must be sinful. This Sin has been touched upon in the foregoing Particular. But I shall speak something more directly and fully upon it. How are the Streets and Roads about this great City thronged with Chaises, Horses, and the wandering Steps of a vain Multitude on the Sabbath; and we may perhaps see Children that are but just able to go, led along by their Hands to take an airy Walk, and spend a Day of Pleasure? Thus are Parents, instead of training up their Children in the Way which they should go, the Guides and Leaders of them into the Road of Destruction. And there are, it may be, some who make a Profession that too much border upon, and encourage such Sins as these. Has it been never known that they who sit down at the Table of the Lord have been mingled amongst this Company of Sinners? And do not they sometimes take their Walks abroad on the Sabbath? " Yes, " it will be answered, but several Pleas should " be heard and weighed in our Vindica- " tion. We are confined to our Trades, " and are shut up in the smoaky City all " the Week, and therefore it can be no " Way sinful to make an Excursion for the " Benefit of the Air upon the Sabbath- " Day.

" Day. Besides, we do not neglect the
 " publick Worship, but we go to some
 " Church or Congregation, and join in
 " Devotion there." But suffer me to
 mention and press these Queries upon you;
 and may they meet with a careful Consider-
 ation, and may Conscience return them an
 impartial Answer! Could you not find some
 Day, or a Part of a Day in the Week to go
 abroad for the Benefit of the Air, besides
 the Sabbath? Are you so closely engaged,
 and so hardly wrought that there can be
 no Time spared from the Labours of the
 Week for the Purposes of bodily Refresh-
 ment? Think duly upon this Head, and,
 if you can with any tolerable, or possible
 Convenience, rather take your Hours of
 Relaxation from common than from sacred
 Time. Again, ask your selves if the chief
 Motive when you wander abroad on the
 Sabbath be not to obtain Health for your
 Body, and whether the Attendance upon
 publick Worship spring from any better
 Reason than the mere Pacification of a Con-
 science that would kindle into Thunder if
 you was to throw off your external Regards
 to Religion on the Sabbath? If nothing bet-
 ter than this be the Source of your Action,
 know that you have not those sublime and
 heavenly Views which should inspire, and
 I 3 consecrate

consecrate our Service on the sacred Day. Again, after you have taken your Walks, perhaps it may be for two or three or more Miles on the Sabbath, are you not, when you come to the House of God, especially in the Summer Season, too weary and drowzy to give a due Attention to the Word of God? And do you not go to, and return from the Place of the Holy, and find no spiritual and substantial Good? Further, when you are traversing over the flowery Paths of the Fields, breathing the Fragrance of the Spring, drinking in the warbling Melody of the Birds, enjoying the verdant Shadows of the Trees, or standing upon some lofty Hill to mark the silver Mazes of some Fountain, or River, or feast your Eye upon the vast and rich Variety of the downward Landscape, I say, when you are thus employed, can you say that your Minds are intent upon Devotion, and is it probable that you at such Seasons are growing in your Conformity to, or rejoicing in Communion with God, and his Son Jesus Christ? And if it is said that through these Works we may trace the Footsteps of the Deity, and that his Perfections are inscribed in the most visible and glorious Characters upon all of them, yet let Conscience speak if these are the constant Improvements
of

of your Walks, and whether you are not apter to suffer your Thoughts to stagnate in the outward Objects, than strike through these Works, and acknowledge, admire, and adore the Wisdom, Power, and Goodness of the great Maker and Preserver of all? Further, are you not obliged to mix Company in some Measure with the loose Herd of Sinners in your Walks, and can you contentedly throw yourself in the Way of their corrupted and contagious Breath? And may not they who go out only for Diversion imagine that you the Professors of Godliness go out upon no other Errand, and so blaspheme that holy Name by which you are called, sport at Religion as a vain Pretence, and from your Appearances of Evil encourage, and vindicate themselves in open and flagitious Iniquity. I add, that some of you that take these Walks on the Sabbath-Day have perhaps given up yourselves to this or that particular Church of Christ, and methinks it is more becoming to keep your constant Place there; and may it not be argued from your Choice to join in Christian Fellowship with the Assembly to which you belong, that you profit best under the Ministry there, and can you lightly sacrifice a probable Advantage to your Souls for no more than a probable

probable Advantage to your Bodies? And finally, I enquire of you when you come to make up your Accounts on the Evening of a Sabbath spent in great Measure in the Fields, whether you do not find that you have lost more as to your Souls than what you have gained as to your Bodies? And methinks your Mind that has been changing its Objects of Thought almost every Moment must be nothing better at Evening for various Confusion than a Wilderness or Chaos of Ideas, and how few amongst them, it is to be feared, are holy, and acceptable to God, whereas you might have expected that your Soul would have been like a calm Sea with the shining and unbroken Images of Holiness and Heaven upon it, if you had passed away your Sabbath in still Retirement, and known no other Walks than those of going to and from the Sanctuary, and no other Company than the Society of worshipping Saints. Ponder over these Questions, and methinks Conscience will give a Decision in Favour of my Advices.

II. Use of Caution.

1. Beware of any Approaches to the Sin of Sabbath-breaking. You know that we are exhorted *to abstain from all Appearance*

of Evil *. And we are to hate even the *Garment spotted by the Flesh* †. Esteem Sin to be what it really is, most detestable in the Sight of God, and most pernicious to your present Peace, and future Happiness; notwithstanding its beautiful Colours, yet know that it is Sin still, that an Hoard of Venom lies under its Tongue, and that it will bite with an intolerable, and immortal Anguish. Come not near therefore *to the Hole of the Asp, nor put your Hand on the Cockatrices Den* ‡. And if you are in Doubt whether the Liberties of the Sabbath will extend to the Speaking, or Doing this and the other Thing, be sure not to speak, or do them §: And

* 1 Phel. v. 22. † Jud. xxiii. ‡ If. xi. 8.

§ When I speak concerning our not saying, or doing any Thing that we are doubtful about, I intend that the Rule should be limited to such Things as are of no great Consequence to us, if they are omitted; as if I am in Doubt whether such or such an Expression in my Conversation, be suitable to the Sanctification of the Sabbath, I may and ought to restrain myself from uttering it, because I am sure no Hurt can ensue if I do not; but Hurt may ensue, that is, I may possibly commit Sin, if I do pronounce it. But if the Case be this, that there is great Importance attending both my speaking, or not speaking, my acting or not acting, then I am not because of my Doubt to determine not to speak, or not to act, but to follow what appears probably to be the best, after having surveyed, and weighed maturely the Arguments for, and the Objections against the Thing in
my

And though your Conduct may seem precise, and affected to others, and you may through Mistakes deny yourself as to some warrantable Freedoms, yet you will have a calm and peaceful Conscience, a Blessing that swallows up the Censures of Mortals, my Mind. Thus for Instance, I may be in Doubt in a sickly State of Body, whether it is best for me to venture abroad into publick Worship or not, or in other Words whether God requires of me to go to his House, or to stay at my own Home on the Sabbath-Day in the Circumstances of my Indisposition. Now in this Case, I am not peremptorily to say, because a Doubt hangs upon my Mind, that I will not go to publick Worship, but I am to ponder what is pleadable for, and what is pleadable against my going abroad, and according to the Preponderation to direct my Conduct. We are Creatures of such dim, and bounded Prospects that we know not often what is good for us, as the wise Man speaks, Eccl. vi. 12. that is, with Certainty, and therefore we are to be governed in our Actions by probable Appearances. And by the Way, I apprehend that the Distinctions I have here introduced may shed an instructive Light over the Meaning of what the Apostle *Paul* says, Rom. xiv. 23. *And he that doubts is damned if he eat.* That is, he that eats this or that Sort of Food whose Lawfulness he questions, is damn'd, or condemned in his own Mind if he eats, because he may eat other Sorts of Provisions, and there can be no Crime if he abstains from that Diet concerning which he doubts whether it be lawful or not. This is a perfectly reasonable Sense of the Apostle's Words, and they are not to be extended to a Doubtfulness in Cases where there is much Moment depending upon my Choice or my Refusal.

and

and will make double Recompence for the Loss of any lawful Liberties that you might have taken without the Violation of the Sabbath.

2. Beware of any Mixtures of Superstition in the Observation of the Sabbath. Our Path is a strait and narrow Path, and we are not to turn aside, either to the Right-hand, or to the Left; but yet how difficult is the Path, as it is narrow as well as strait, to find, especially as such a thick Film of Darkness, or at least so many dusky Shadows, cloud the Eye of the Understanding. But however let us from Scripture endeavour to trace our Duty, and in a Dependence upon divine Guidance to attain the happy Medium between Licentiousness on the one Hand, and Superstition on the other; and let no uncommanded Severities or Rigors be ever owned, and practised, as Divine, ever bearing in Memory that the Institution of the Sabbath was a special Fruit of the Divine Goodness, and that our Heavenly Father takes no Delight in, and indeed has laid upon us no hard and painful Yokes, such as our Natures in their present State of Frailty are unable to endure. *My Yoke is easy, and my Burden is light* *, said our Divine Master, and if the Yoke is found

* Matt. xi. 30.

to be hard and heavy, 'tis because our Depravity and Sinfulness makes us form wrong Judgments of it, or because the Inventions of Men have annexed a Load of their own, which is to be rejected as what brings Sorrow and Sin along with it at the same Time.

3. Beware of such Relations and Situations of Life as may expose you to the Danger of breaking the Sabbath. And, 1. Be careful what Person it is that you choose for your Partner in Life. *Be not unequally yoked together with Unbelievers; for what Fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness? And what Communion hath Light with Darkness* *? The Marriage-Relation is the nearest of all Relations; and therefore take heed that you do not enter the Nuptial Bands with a vain and wicked Person, one who shall take a Pleasure perhaps, not only in profaning the Sabbath, but in spreading every Temptation for others to commit the same Wickedness. You must expect at least, if you are joined to such a Person for Life, often to hear that Sort of Language that will wound your Ear and your Heart, if you have any quick Sense of Sin: Or perhaps either through Fear or Affection you may be drawn into Iniquity,

* 2 Cor. vi. 14.

and mingle in the same unhallowed and vain Discourses, the Consequence of which will be, that you will grow remiss and negligent as to vital Godliness; for one Inroad upon the Conscience will open the Way for more Sins to follow, and it may be that in Time the blooming Appearance of Piety will fade away, and the very Leaves of Profession will drop off under the dark and malignant Shadow and Influence of such a sinful Companion of your Days. How many enter into the wedded State without ever seriously thinking of the Religion of the Person they are to live with, or with a vain Hope that they shall be instrumental in drawing their Partner from a sinful Course into the Ways of Holiness? But what has been the Event? Alas! the seemingly pious Person has degenerated into a loose prophane Sinner, instead of the really prophane Sinner being changed into a true Saint. So pestilential Vapours may spread their Contagion, and destroy a promising Constitution of Health, but Health is found to have no such communicative Powers for the Benefit of others.

2. Be careful in what Situations of Life you are placed. As to young Persons designing Apprenticeships for Trades, I must press it upon their Parents and Friends to enquire out such Houses where Religion

K

dwells

dwells, and I must adjure them not for any brighter Prospects of worldly Advantage to overlook the essential Article of Religion. Much depends, under God, upon the Families where Persons are planted in their early Years; and if you would rejoice to see the Children under your Direction grow into Character in the World, Supports to their Families, and Honours to the Church of Christ, do not suffer them to spend their Years of Youth in Houses where the Power, and the Forms of Godliness are unknown. Young Minds are like tender Mould; and if the Seeds of Vice are shed and nurtured in them by daily Prophane-ness of Conversation and Life in their Masters, or Fellow-Servants, you must fear that in the End both you, and they, will reap Misery and Ruin. As to Servants, I mean hired Servants, let them not for the Sake of Lucre ever go into, or make their Stay in such Households where there is no Regard to the publick Worship of God; for how can they hope for Divine Blessings where there are no Footsteps of the Divine Fear? How is it possible without manifold Disturbances to spend their Sabbaths in the private or publick Exercises of Devotion? Or can they imagine that they will not have such Tasks of Service imposed up-
on

on them as will lead them, if they are obeyed, to a Violation of the fourth Commandment? I could heartily wish that these Hints were seriously attended to, and that a Conduct was formed accordingly.

III. Use of Examination.

Let us examine if we have not profaned the Sabbath? Have we abstained from all Manner of Work, and not suffered ourselves, or any of our Family, to do any Thing but what has had the Warrant of Necessity and Mercy upon it? Have not we indulged to worldly Pleasures on the Sabbath, and more favoured and tasted the low Gratifications of Sense and Time, than the pure spiritual Pleasures that descend from Heaven, and have a Divine Tendency to raise and fix our Affections there? How often have we been for seeking Refreshment from our broken Cisterns, when we should have derived our Joys from the Fountain of living Waters? Has the House of God seen us constantly there whenever Necessity has not opposed its Bar in the Way? Have we not sought out many sinful Inventions to detain us at Home, when God has commanded us to appear as Worshipers in his Courts? Have we not seemed to think it enough if we came to his

House one Part of the Sabbath, though no sufficient Plea, a Plea that will abide the Test of God or our own Consciences, has been found to apologize for our partial Attendances upon the Word? Further, have we not consumed the Intervals of Divine Service in Levity, and Folly, or in worldly Cares, and Projects? And what Clouds of Darknes have sat upon the Mornings, Noons, and Evenings of our Sabbaths, though we fancied that many Rays of Devotion shone over the Hours of publick Worship? Oh, what wasteful Blanks, and horrible Abuses appear as dreadful Witnesses against us in the Reviewals of past Sabbaths! We may all say, " Lord, *we remember our Faults this Day* *.

" The Iniquities of our holy Days are so great, that if thou, Lord, wert to mark Iniquity, O Lord, *who could stand* †? There is not one Sabbath in all the numerous Train that we can survey over, but what has so much Guilt in it as to arm a Sentence of eternal Wrath against us.

" We have said to God, *Depart from us*, and thou, Lord, mightest turn our Choice into our Punishment, and say, *Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels* §."

* Gen. xli. 9. † Ps. cxxx 3. § Mat. xxv. 41.

IV. Use of Exhortation.

1. Let us consider over the Crime of violating the Sabbath. Surely Sabbath-breaking must be no small Crime that tramples upon the express Command of God, for what worse Iniquity can there be than for a Creature, the Dependant upon his Breath, and the Pensioner of his Goodness, to rise up in Rebellion against his Maker and Sovereign? Can Sabbath-breaking be a light Iniquity, since it is an Apostacy from the Example of Christ; for how many are the Endearments of Love, as well as the Obligations of Duty, summed up in the Pattern of the Saviour of Sinners, and the Lord of Glory? Again, does not the Sabbath-breaker set at nought exceeding great and precious Promises, Promises that contain an Immensity of Blessings in them, and which are set forth to invite and keep our Souls in the Way everlasting? Again, does not Sabbath-breaking bid Defiance to the Threatnings of the Almighty, as if they were only Sounds of Terror, and were not filled with a real Vengeance? What is a Threatning but a flaming Sword, and what less does the Sabbath-breaker presume to do than rush upon its burning Point? Further, is not the Goodness of God displayed in the

Institution of the Sabbath, and shall Goodness be abused, despised, and insulted? Shall a Law founded upon Love, and interwoven with Love be broken, and the Lawgiver be patient under the Wrong, a Wrong blackened by the most horrid Ingratitude? Again, must not Sabbath-breaking be a foul Iniquity, since it is the very Parent of Sin and is fruitful of such a numerous and destructive Offspring, as have cast the Sinner out of this World as a Victim of Justice, and sent him into the other, as it is to be feared, as a Brand of the everlasting Burnings? And finally must not Sabbath-breaking be placed as the very Pitch of Iniquity since it alienates our Souls from the Work and Enjoyments of Heaven, strengthens the Image of Satan upon us, and turns us not into fit Associates for God and blessed Spirits, but for the Devil, and his Angels. View over Sabbath-breaking in this Variety of Aggravations, and you will conclude that it must be out of Measure sinful.

2. Let us humble our selves under the Sense of our Sins in breaking the Sabbath. For all our Sins we should be humbled before God, but especially for the Violation of his holy Day. Harden not thy self, O Sinner, against God, for thou mayest be assured

assured that thou shalt not prosper by thy obstinate and inflexible Rebellion. His Omnipotence might inflict, and his Justice would vindicate the Punishment, and what Beam of his Glory would be eclipsed, or what Degree of his Happiness lost, should he make thee the everlasting Prisoner of Darkness, Misery, and Despair? Humble thy self therefore before thine Almighty Adversary. *Acknowledge that against him, and him only thou hast sinned, and done this Evil in his Sight* *. Pretend not to palliate thy Guilt, but confess thy Sins, weep over thy Sins, and in overwhelming Confusion, and Sorrow, cast thy self down at the Throne of Grace, and say, and though it be but in a broken Groan, yet the Groan of a broken Heart shall be accepted, *Lord be merciful to me a Sinner* †.

3. Plead for Forgiveness in the Name, and relying upon the Merits and Mediation of the Lord of the Sabbath. Jesus Christ is *the Lord of the Sabbath* §, and through Jesus Christ it is that we are to make our Approaches and Addresses to God, and in Virtue of his Merits, and Mediation are we to expect our Answers of Mercy and Blessing. *By him we have Access by*

* Ps. li. 4. † Luke xviii. 13. § Mark. ii. 28.

*Faith into the Grace wherein we stand *.*
In him it is that God is reconciling the World
unto himself not imputing their Trespases †.
Him hath God exalted with his Right-hand
to be a Prince, and Saviour, to give Repen-
tance to ISRAEL, and Forgiveness of Sins ‡.
 It becomes not the affronted Grandeur of
 God to treat with Sinners in any other
 Way than through Christ. He is the Sa-
 crifice, a Sacrifice that has sent its Perfumes
 to Heaven, a Sacrifice that has rendered
 God propitious to us, and hence the Pre-
 valency of his continual Intercession. Un-
 attuned Glories are consuming Glories. *But*
having this High-Priest over the House of
God, we may draw near with a true Heart
in full Assurance of Faith §. Here therefore
 let us ground our Prayers, urge our Pleas,
 and rest our Hopes of Pardon, and let us
 know for our strong Consolation *that where*
Sin has abounded Grace does much more a-
bound, and that as Sin hath reigned unto Death
even so does Grace reign through Righteous-
ness unto eternal Life through Jesus Christ
our Lord ||.

4. Be entirely, and immediately resolved
 in the Divine Strength never to break the
 Sabbath knowingly and wilfully more. With

* Rom. v. 2. † 2 Cor. v. 19. ‡ Act. v. 31.

§ Heb. x. 21. || Rom. v. 20.

Confession of Sin there must be joined a Forsaking of it. *What have I to do any more with Idols?* * was the Language of ancient, and must be the Language of present Converts. There can be no true Repentance without Reformation. And if the Heart is changed, the Effects will be soon be legible upon the Life. Resolve therefore *that wherein thou hast done Iniquity thou wilt do so no more* †. And resolve in the Strength of Divine Grace, that Divine Grace which the Spirit, the Author of Regeneration and Sanctification, confers upon Sinners. On better Help than thine own place thy Confidence, or thou buildest upon uncertain Sands, and the next Blast of Temptation may sweep thy Foundation, and thy Superstructure away; *Trust in the Lord with all thine Heart, and lean not to thine own Understanding; in all thy Ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy Paths* ‖. Turn the Commands of God into Prayer, and thou shalt practise them with Success. And if he says, *Keep my Precepts diligently*, mould the Precept into a Petition, and return the Eccho, *O that my Ways were directed to keep thy Statutes* ‡. *Hold up my Goings in thy Paths,*

* Hof. xiv. 8. † Job xxxiv. 32. ‖ Pro. iii. 6.

‡ Pf. cxix. 4, 5.

that my Footsteps slip not §. Guide me by thy Counsel, and afterwards receive me to Glory.†

V. Use of Terror.

I might here address myself to Sinners in particular, but the former Enlargements when I considered the Divine Threatnings against Sabbath-breaking have prevented me. I will therefore direct my Use of Terror in a general Address to the Nation. And since Sabbath-breaking is so heinous a Sin, and so universally abounds, what Judgments are there that we may not dread at the Hand of a righteous, and angry God? What was the Spring of those Judgments that overwhelmed the *Jewish* Nation, when their City was dismantled, their Temple destroyed, their Country depopulated, and themselves delivered over into Captivity to their proud Enemies, and cruel Oppressors? Was it not the Prophanation of the Sabbath *? And are we better than They in this Respect, can we expect then, while we continue our notorious Breaches of the Sabbath, a less Storm of Vengeance to be gathering against us? And methinks we have already felt some Drops, and find that the Tempest of Divine Wrath is ready to break down upon us. What else is the Meaning § Psal. xvii. 5. † Psal. lxxiii. 24. * Neh. xiii. 18.

of

of the Desolations among the Cattle, Desolations so large, that Thousands and ten Thousands of our Herds are perished from the Pastures, and so lasting, that it seems as if the Remnants of the Murrain of a former Year were ordained to be devoured by the Murrain of the next? Further if the Hand of God is not stretched out against us, what is the Occasion of a providential Permission of the hitherto uncontrollable Encroachments of the *French* Tyranny, a Tyranny that aims no less a Mischief than the Extirpation of our Liberty, Religion, and Lives, a Tyranny that has entered into the Borders of a neighbouring *Protestant* State, and that intends, after its brutal Havocks and Conquests there, to bend its destructive Power into our Islands, and swallow up GREAT-BRITAIN in abject, and endless Slavery and Ruin. O that GREAT-BRITAIN therefore would break off its Sins by Righteousness, and particularly the horrid Sin of Sabbath-Breaking! How happy would it be if, while God is parleying with his Vengeance, *How shall I give thee up EPHRAIM? How shall I deliver thee ISRAEL? How shall I make thee as ADMAH? How shall I set thee as ZEBOIM**? How happy would it be if, while God is intermingling his

* Hof. xi. 8.

that my Footsteps slip not §. Guide me by thy Counsel, and afterwards receive me to Glory.†

V. Use of Terror.

I might here address myself to Sinners in particular, but the former Enlargements when I considered the Divine Threatnings against Sabbath-breaking have prevented me. I will therefore direct my Use of Terror in a general Address to the Nation. And since Sabbath-breaking is so heinous a Sin, and so universally abounds, what Judgments are there that we may not dread at the Hand of a righteous, and angry God? What was the Spring of those Judgments that overwhelmed the *Jewish* Nation, when their City was dismantled, their Temple destroyed, their Country depopulated, and themselves delivered over into Captivity to their proud Enemies, and cruel Oppressors? Was it not the Prophanation of the Sabbath *? And are we better than They in this Respect, can we expect then, while we continue our notorious Breaches of the Sabbath, a less Storm of Vengeance to be gathering against us? And methinks we have already felt some Drops, and find that the Tempest of Divine Wrath is ready to break down upon us. What else is the Meaning § Psal. xvii. 5. † Psal. lxxiii. 24. * Neh. xiii. 18.

of

of the Desolations among the Cattle, Desolations so large, that Thousands and ten Thousands of our Herds are perished from the Pastures, and so lasting, that it seems as if the Remnants of the Murrain of a former Year were ordained to be devoured by the Murrain of the next? Further if the Hand of God is not stretched out against us, what is the Occasion of a providential Permission of the hitherto uncontrollable Encroachments of the *French* Tyranny, a Tyranny that aims no less a Mischief than the Extirpation of our Liberty, Religion, and Lives, a Tyranny that has entered into the Borders of a neighbouring *Protestant* State, and that intends, after its brutal Havocks and Conquests there, to bend its destructive Power into our Islands, and swallow up GREAT-BRITAIN in abject, and endless Slavery and Ruin. O that GREAT-BRITAIN therefore would break off its Sins by Righteousness, and particularly the horrid Sin of Sabbath-Breaking! How happy would it be if, while God is parleying with his Vengeance, *How shall I give thee up EPHRAIM? How shall I deliver thee ISRAEL? How shall I make thee as ADMAH? How shall I set thee as ZEOIM**? How happy would it be if, while God is intermingling his

* Hof. xi. 8.

gloomy Frowns with so many Gleams of Mercy, and holding back his Hand from the full Scope of his Anger, we would hear and obey that good Advice; O ISRAEL *return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine Iniquity. Take with you Words, and turn to the Lord, say unto him, take away all Iniquity, and receive us graciously, so will we render the Calves, that is, the Fruits of our Lips*†? But if we will persist in our Sins, we must expect to be like Sodom and Gemorrha, as in Crime so in Punishment; and that this Land of Plenty, Peace, and Liberty will be turned into a flaming, and tremendous Mark of the Divine Vengeance to the surrounding Nations.

VI. And lastly, a Use of Consolation.

Blessed are they who keep holy the Sabbath. I only repeat what God himself has said, *Blessed is the Man that keeps the Sabbath from polluting it* ||. And this Blessedness parts itself into two Streams, a Blessedness as to the present Life, and a Blessedness as to the Life to come. 1. Blessed is the Man that keeps the Sabbath in this Life. Such Souls walk with God, for they love the Law of God, and particularly that

† Hof. xiv. 1, 2, 3. || Is. lvi. 2.

important

important Part of it that commands us to sanctify the Sabbath, and great Peace have they that love the Divine Law, and nothing shall offend them. In their publick, and private Devotions they seek, and they find their God, and the Visits of his Love are their Glory and their Joy. To such Souls as these God manifests himself as their God, and amidst all the changing and distressed Scenes of Life he will be their Shield to ward off their Dangers, and their Sun to scatter away their Darkness and Fears and a smiling Conscience as a Counterpart to a smiling God is the Joy unspeakable and full of Glory. *What can harm them who are Followers of that which is good? * Things present, Things to come, are theirs †*, by the wonderful Virtues of that Covenant that transforms all seeming Evils into real Good, and unites all the Events of Time as the Ties of, and the Aids to our spiritual and everlasting Felicity. Or if God should hide his Face from his People, and should suffer them to make their Way to Heaven through a Night of Clouds, though this is rarely the Case with Saints that keep close to him, or if it is the Case, it is generally known that these Clouds are in some Part or at some Hour irradiated with the Light of the Divine Countenance, yet all shall be well at last;

• 1 Pet. iii. 13.

† 1 Cor. iii. 14.

For, 2. And lastly, Blessed is the Man that keeps the Sabbath as to the Life to come. Keeping of the Sabbath in the Manner that has been urged is an Evidence of the Truth of Grace in the Heart, and from this Fruit we may be assured of the Goodness of the Root, and that the other Fruits of the Spirit accompany it. *Say ye then to such a righteous Man it shall be well with him, for he shall eat the Fruit of his Doings.** He sows,† and it may be he sows in Tears, and many Evangelical Meltings of Repentance perhaps are found in his Sabbath, but he *shall reap in Joy, in the Fulness of Joy. Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have Right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the Gates into the City.* || The Right spoken of is a Right that is founded upon the free Promise of God through Jesus Christ, but the Possession is as sure and certain to all the Servants of God, as if they themselves could procure the promised Glory at the Hands of God, and hence the Use of the Expression. *Saints are Heirs according to the Hope of eternal Life,* § or as the Passage may perhaps be better rendered, *Heirs of eternal Life according to Hope, or in Hope.* They are Heirs, their Title through Jesus Christ is indisputable, nor shall the Purchase of his

* Isaiah iii. 10. † Ps. cxxvi. 5. || Rev. xxii. 14.
§ Tit. iii. 7.

Cross, and the Pleas of his Throne become frustrate and vain. *Saints are Heirs of eternal Life*; *Life* imports not a bare Lasting without the Joys of Being, but an Existence surrounded with every Circumstance that is needful to make it compleatly happy; *and Saints are Heirs of eternal Life*, a Life that is not narrowed by Threescore Years and Ten or Fourscore Years, as our poor Spans are, or a Life that reaches to Thousands or Millions of Years and is closed there, but the *Life is eternal*, it is to be spent in Communion with God, and it is indissolubly supported by, and, as it were, connected with his own Eternity, and the Star, the Saint made happy in the Enjoyment of God, shall never lose its Light, till the Sun that feeds it, the great, and gracious God, shall lose his vital Beams; and who that dreads, or who that suspects a withering Decay, or a dark Eclipse upon independent, and uncreated Glories? And Saints are Heirs of eternal Life *in Hope*. *In Hope*, the Words intend no Uncertainty, but only that Saints are not yet in Possession of their Blessedness: But there is but this short Minute of Time, and this Veil of Clay that divides betwixt their Souls and Heaven, and how soon will the Minute be spent, and the Curtain drop, and then oh! the ineffable, and inconceivable Pleasures of *beholding God's Face in Right*

Righteousness, and awaking in his Likeness,
to enjoy that Rest, that Sabbatism, that re-
mains for the People of God.†*

Two HYMNS suited to the Subjects of
the foregoing Discourse.

HYMN I.

The Necessity of the Sanctification of the
Sabbath.

I.

GREAT God, I see the Stamp Divine
Upon this sacred Day,
And to thy Law these Pow'rs of mine
Obedient Homage pay.

II.

When Jesus came in fleshly Weeds
Thy Precepts to fulfil,
He in the Language of his Deeds
Enforc'd thy holy Will.

III.

T' invite our wand'ring Steps to trace
The Path that thou hast shown,
Thy Promise spreads its heavenly Grace,
And blooms with Bliss unknown.

* Ps. xvii. 15.

† Heb. iv. 9.

IV.

O'er him that wastes celestial Hours
In Pastimes, or in Cares,
Justice in Indignation low'rs,
And endless Fires prepares.

V.

Perpetual Pleasures bless the Road,
Where Heav'n instructs to go,
Here Fruits of fragrant Life are strow'd,
And warbling Fountains flow.

VI.

Lord, by a Sabbath spent with Thee
We make the sure Essay
If Heav'n will with our Souls agree,
And hail th' eternal Day.

VII.

And can we then encompass'd round
With such persuasive Force
The Sabbaths sacred Honours wound,
And quit the Heav'nly Course?

H Y M N II.

The Nature of the Sanctification of the Sabbath.

I.

AND dost Thou, Lord, of Man demand
That on thy Day he should abstain
From every Labour of his Hand,
And ev'ry Earth-born Care restrain?

II.

Dost thou forbid our Souls to rove
Amidst the Charms of Sense and Time,
And to thy Self direct their Love
In Transports sacred, and sublime?

III.

Is it thy Will that at thine House
The holy Hours we should employ,
And there unite our solemn Vows,
And hear the Word, and taste the Joy?

IV.

And should the Remnant-Spaces shine
With pure Devotions fervent Ray,
And Thoughts, and Words and Deeds Divine
Crown the full Circle of the Day?

Lord,

V.

Lord, we obey ; and own that Love
Has ev'ry pleasing Precept giv'n ;
Teach us to serve like Saints above,
And form us for the Work of Heav'n.

VI.

Thus ev'ry Sabbath as it flies
Shall yield a Pledge of Rest to come,
The glorious Rest beyond the Skies,
The humble Sabbath in the Tomb.

F I N I S.





Lately published by the same Author.

THE Prosperity of the Christian Church in the latter Ages of Time, represented and improved in a Sermon preached June 17, 1747; at the Rev. Mr. Bradbury's Meeting-Place in New-Court, near Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, at a monthly Exercise of Praise. Price 6 d.

An Eulogy upon the Death of the Rev. Mr. Peter Goadum, who departed this Life November 27, 1747, in the 64th Year of his Age. Price 3 d.

